

NATION'S REPROACH,
AND THE
CHURCH'S GRIEF:

OF A SERIOUS and NEEDFUL
WORD of ADVICE

To those who needlessly frequent
Taverns and Publick Houses,
AND
Often spend the EVENING there.

In a Letter to my Neighbours and Countrymen.

By GEORGE BRAITHWAITE, M. A.

Lev. xix. 17. Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.

Prov. xiv. 34. Righteousness exalteth a Nation; but Sin is a Reproach to any People.

Jer. xiii. 17. But if ye will not hear it, my Soul shall weep in secret Places for your Pride; and mine Eye shall weep sore, and run down with Tears, because the Lord's Plock is carried away captive.

L O N D O N :

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THE
NATION'S REFORMATION
AND THE
CHURCH'S GRIEF

OF
WORD OF ADVICE
To those who need it



Often Read the Following
In a Letter to my Neighbours and Countrymen
By GEORGE FRANKLIN WATTS, ESQ.

17. xix. 17. The Lord is my strength and my
18. xix. 17. The Lord is my strength and my
19. xix. 17. The Lord is my strength and my
20. xix. 17. The Lord is my strength and my

L O W D O N

Printed by J. W. ... in the ...
1790



TO MY
NEIGHBOURS and FRIENDS

In and about the T o w n of
Bridlington, in Yorkshire.

Honoured and Beloved,



THOUGH the true Religion and
Godliness, which we all profess,
is not so much speculative as pra-
ctical, yet that the practical Part
of it may be attended to with
more Honour to God, and Com-
fort to our selves; it is necessary that the
Theory be good, and the Principles sound and
consonant to the Scriptures of Truth: For so
it is best suited and adapted to promote the
Happiness which God proposes, and which
we are permitted to hope for and expect from
his hand. And as it is not only in the Do-
ctrine and Tendency, but also in the Power

and Energy of the Grace of God to persuade Men to *cease to do evil, and learn to do well*. To *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*. So it is necessary that the Tree be first made good, and the Fountain healed, before the Fruit can be good, or the Streams wholesome; while my Prayers therefore are not wanting, that the Spirit of Grace may effect this in many, and particularly in you, my Neighbours, and those whom Providence hath put under my more immediate Care; lest any of you (all whose Welfare and best Happiness I sincerely desire) should impose on your selves, or be imposed on by others, with flattering and deluded Hopes that your State is good, and your Title to the Favour of God and eternal Life indisputable; when yet you can indulge or countenance any known Sin, *walk after and mind the Things of the Flesh, and seek to please the carnal Mind, which is Enmity against God, and not subject to his Law*; lest, I say, any of you should be fatally mistaken. I have here cautioned you against a crying Abomination, plainly bespeaking an unsanctified Heart, and an unholy Disposition: I mean the haunting and needless frequenting of Taverns and Publick-houses; a Practice however censured and cry'd out against by many, as what loves the Night, and is suited to Dark-

^a Isa. i. 16.

^b Tit. i. 11, 12.

^c Rom. viii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

DEDICATION.

ness, and whose Works the Light would reprove, is a Practice that nevertheless makes bold and daring Advances, at this Day, in many Countries and Cities, Towns and Villages not excepted.

As the Observation, or Complaints of it in other Places have affected me, so it has oft been a Grief to my Soul, to hear how many of my Neighbours have spent much of their Time, and especially the Evenings, in *Publick-houses*; and how these Houses are usually crowded, and sometimes very late, (Lord's Day Evenings not excepted): And as I have walked our Streets, purposely to be convinced by my own Eyes and Ears, so with Sorrow I have observed the vile Extravagancies of that Excess, which is commonly the Effect of this Practice. What profane Discourse, what Disputes, Wranglings, Quarrels, leud and filthy Songs are these Houses fill'd withal, when others, through the Heat of the Liquor they have had there, reel and rave in the Streets as *Bedlamites*, and throw out the most execrable Curses; and at the same time, as if the People were either generally infected, or the Godly in the Place affrighted from their Duty: Scarce a Family in the Streets is heard to read the Scriptures, pray, sing the Praises of God, or any other way employed for the real Good of the Household.

This considered, and weighed in my own Mind, and oft bemoaned secretly in vain, the
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Sympathy

Sympathy and Affection which I bare to you, heightened by the Principles and Doctrines of the Christian Religion, which tells us, that *no Man is born for himself; and so no Man* (under that Profession especially), *should live to himself*; but in his Place, and according to his Character and Ability, endeavour, by his Usefulness to others, to shew himself a diffusive Blessing; and in a peculiar manner, to scatter the Sweets of his Influence near his own Camp, and where the Bounds of his Habitation are set.

On this Account it is, that I have, for your sakes especially, my dear Neighbours, both employed my spare Hours for some time on this Subject; and in some measure am constrained to present you, in this publick manner, with the following Sheets.

I am not insensible, as they will by this means fall into the Hands of others also, that they may meet with cold Entertainment from some, and perhaps, Ridicule and open Reflections from others, both in regard of the Subject, and the way of its Management; as it strikes at the Root, and endeavours to sap and undermine a Practice which many are fond of maintaining and supporting with much Industry, Hazard, and Expence.

And as the poor Man's Counsel is often despised, because he is poor, so the Plainness of the Style, and Meanness of the Dress wherein this Treatise is sent out; its not having
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the Advantage of those masterly Strokes, those Embellishments of Oratory, that carry so great a Weight with many, to recommend any Subject in our Day, may render it disagreeable to the Taste, and contemptible in the Opinion of others: But neither of these will give me much Uneasiness, whilst my Views and Motives are such as I am persuaded both you, my Neighbours, and the rest of the more thinking, serious, and unprejudiced Part of Mankind will justify, and which the Christian Doctrine and Principles do vouch for and patronize.

I would not be mistaken in any Part of the Discourse, as if my Design was wholly to decry *Taverns* and *Publick-houses*, and all use of them, or had conceived any Prejudice against those, who with Honesty, Honour, and good Order support them, or are themselves and their Families comfortably supported by them; would therefore premise these few things.

I. That I do not conceive it is absolutely unlawful for Persons of any State or Character, though of the greatest and most strict Religion and Piety, to go into a *Tavern* or *Alehouse* sometimes, and on some Occasions, as for necessary Refreshment, or when on a Journey, or when the Business of their Civil Callings, or their Religious Duties do necessarily call them thereto: For *Taverns* or *Alehouses* are so far from being unlawful Places in themselves, that they are both allowable,

con.

convenient, and necessary, in the Judgment of all Countries; wherein they are not only tolerated, but encouraged. And as the Scriptures mention such to have been Places of Refreshment, and Entertainment of old, godly Men, when providentially called thereto, have gone into, and made use of them. It was at an Inn the Patriarchs called, and perhaps lodged, in their way from Egypt. In such a Place Moses is recorded to have been. As such a Place Joseph and Mary lodged when our Lord was born. And the Duties of a Man's general and particular Calling may well consist. His general Calling, as he is a Christian, does not nullify, but rather argue for his Employ in, and Care about some particular Calling, and makes it *sanctified to him*.

2. When Men are necessitated to go into those Places of common Resort, they should be particularly careful and strict in all their Behaviour; and the greater Appearance they make, the higher Places they fill, either in the World, or in the Church; or the more they profess of Religion, and to make Conscience of what is sacred, the more exact and circumspect should they be in all their Conduct, both as every Word and Motion of such will be particularly noticed and remarked upon; and as there is more danger of being drawn into Sin there, than in many other Places, by the

Gen. xlii. 27. Exod. iv. 24. Luke ii. 7. 1 Cor. vii. 20.

many Temptations usually presented there; and so by an holy Caution and Reserve, (even in Places of utmost Hazard, as well as of great Discouragement) they should show that *they always set God before them, and have him at their right hand*. That they have inward Delight in Piety, and desire and endeavour to persuade others to glorify God.

3. I would premise also, That it is neither convenient nor lawful for Persons to be longer or more frequently in such Places than real Necessity calls for, or obliges them to: And this is what the whole Discourse in the following Sheets is levell'd against, *i. e. a needless frequenting of Taverns and Publick-houses, and tarrying long there*. But there is so little regard shewn to such Subjects as these, and they are so generally disesteemed by Men of Figure in the World, and by some of considerable Stations, in the Church of God, (whose Honour I sincerely wish, and whose Comfort and best Good I am heartily concerned for) that I expect but little Success, unless God should incline them to read with Care, and judge with Impartiality; and to see and observe the Tendency of such a Conduct, to bring Infamy and Ruin on themselves, as well as Reproach and Dishonour on that holy Name, whereby they are called. And

Psal. xvi. 8.

a

whereas

whereas with some, other means have in vain been tried, and made use of to reform and reclaim them, my Resentment against the Practice is hereby the more heightened, and my Compassion for its Vassals, hath prompted me to have Recourse to this last Method in my Power to do them Service. And if by any former Thoughts, Discourse, or Hints on this Subject, there have been wrought in some Minds an acknowledged Conviction of the sad Error and dangerous Mistake of giving in to such a Practice, and there have been thence excited some Resolutions of an after Amendment: But these Convictions are now worn off, and the once apprehended Evil forgotten, their Resolves grown cold, their Care slackned, and themselves left in the last Danger of a Relapse, or as much exposed as ever to all the Consequences of this Delusion; such Persons will here have a faithful Monitor always at hand, a Means of Restraint from a threatening Precipice, and a Preservative from one of the most infectious and stubborn Diseases that assault Mankind.

It being then no more in my Endeavour or Desire to gratify the Sensual, and please the Extravagant, or to entertain the Ears, and suit the Taste of the Curious, than to blow up the Fire, and heap Fewel on the Tempers which are apt to be heated with this Practice; but

contrariwise, to do each of them all the real and good Service I can, I have, in a homely Style, made what is said easy to the meanest Capacity.

And when I remember the great Apostle *Paul* (who would not labour as one that beats the Air, or be only as *sounding Brass*, or a *tinkling Cymbal*, in his Doctrine and Instructions) *came not with Excellency of Speech*¹, or of Wisdom, nor preached with enticing Words of Man's Wisdom; but in Plainness of Speech recommended his Embassy to every Man's Conscience. My Desire excites my Endeavour, and encourages my hopes of some Advantage in this Way.

I would not have any of those then, into whose Hands this may come, to look so much on the Dress, as the Design of the same, or to reject the Service, because it is presented in a homely manner, but to read and receive it with the same charitable Temper, in which it was penn'd, and is now sent out; and that it may be of use to reform many where it goes, and especially my Neighbourhood, or some therein, and to restore a settled good Order in Families, which, as it will both contribute to the present Comfort, and lasting Honour of the Generation that now is, and carry all the Argument of such a President, to influence the

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 1—4.

Principles and Lives of those who are yet young and tender, and be a growing Advantage still in coming Years; so it will abundantly compensate the Pains, and answer the Design of him who commends it to the divine Blessing, and your Perusal; and is, (tho' unworthy)

Yours,

in the Service of Christ,

and his Truth,

GEO. BRAITHWAITE.



TO THE
READER.

THE following Treatise breathing so much the Spirit of Primitive Christianity, I could not easily suffer it to pass through my Hands, without expressing the Pleasure I had in the Perusal, and adding my best Wishes for its desired Success. No Time, I'm persuaded, ever called more for such a serious and spiritual Exhortation; and with Pleasure I observe, whilst many are criminally silent on this Head, for fear of giving Offence to, and losing the Esteem of Men, a Servant of God in the Country is stirred up and qualify'd, has Skill and Courage

rage given him to reprove a Vice, which through long Usage is now grown familiar and universal; and what the Generality give into without Fear or Shame, though it manifestly tends to the Dishonour of God, the Reproach of Religion, and the Ruin of their Families. Many, I expect, upon the Reading the Title, will throw it aside, and hardly be engaged to go any farther: Nor is it to be wondred at, if such as these should censure it as a stiff and awkward, ill-tim'd and unfashionable Performance. But as to decry before we have examin'd, and reject at random, betrays our Bigottry and Prejudice, our Folly and Aversion to Reproof; so to have such Advice so much for our Advantage, put into our Hands by Providence, is, whatever we may think of it, a Mercy, for which we are accountable, and a Talent which ought to be improved.

The Division of it into Chapters and Sections, throws the Argument into a striking and familiar Light, gives Ease to the Reader, and an Opportunity, with Advantage, to begin and leave off where he pleases.

TO the READER.

XV

The Quotations, whether Historical or Theological, are just and apposite; and the Intermixture of them beautiful and entertaining: The Reasoning in the whole strong and conclusive; and the Expostulations solemn, close, and affectionate. So that without Flattery to my Friend, or Imposition on the Reader, I may promise him a most agreeable and useful Entertainment, if his Mind is not wholly sensual, and utterly estranged from every thing which is good.

But I would especially recommend it to the rising Generation, as a proper Preservative in the Hand of God, from a Practice as dangerous to themselves, as destructive to Religion. Nor do I know of a more proper Present, to young Ones, at the Beginning of the Year, or on other Occasions.

That it may come to every Reader with the Blessing of Heaven, and be instrumental for promoting his best Interests; That it may be own'd for the Conviction and Reformation of Many, and the Instruction of All, that hereby,
in

in some Measure, a Stop may be put to a growing Evil, and Religion in Families yet again flourish, and prosper, is the sincere Desire and Prayer of

READER,

thy hearty Well-wisher, and

Servant in the Gospel.

Dec. 29, 1732.

SAMUEL WILSON.

THE



THE
NATION'S REPROACH,

AND

Church's Grief, &c.

THERE being nothing that concerns us, or that we are capable of, as Men, more honourable in it self than Religion or true Godliness; nothing more sweet and entertaining; or more necessary and profitable for us than the Possession of it; and consequently nothing that those who have or profess to have it, should be more tender to preserve in its Purity and Power, or careful to avoid what would justly bring any Imputation on it, or on themselves in the Profession of it; there being also impressed on Mankind in general, an Idea or Notion of a God, a first and chief Being; who is self-existing and independent; the Source and Cause
B of

of Being to all others, and *is* *bliss* *we* *live* *and* *move*, *and* *have* *our* *Being* (how wild and extravagant soever the Notions of some Persons have been, or are, concerning God) the Authority of the Impression convinces that God is to be worshipped and openly acknowledged in his own way. Thus far Nature and Grace agree to vouch the same Truth, and speak the same Thing. *All People will walk every one in the Name of his God; and we will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever*^b. Q U A

It is hence highly necessary for, and becoming all those who enjoy, believe, delight in, and profess to regard the Scripture Revelation (which instructs Men the best about, and gives them the most suitable and refined Notions of the only true God, and how he ought to be worshipped) strictly to apply themselves to what he therein requires, and approves, and religiously to avoid whatsoever he forbids and dislikes, as what their Enjoyments, their Desires, their Expectations and Profession oblige and call them to.

It is a Desire then that every one of these Arguments may carry their full Weight with you, that God may be glorified, your Christian Profession adorned, your spiritual and eternal Welfare more sensibly secured, and visibly furthered, my Soul unburdened, and

of
A. 17. 28. Mic. iv. 5.
Duty

Taverns and Publick-Houses

Duty discharged, as one who would not live unto himself, but unto the Lord; that in my reviving and reciting the joint Testimony, of many judicious, learned and grave Divines, before: My present Testimony is annexed, and my Protest thus publicly entered, against a too common and too little noticed growing evil Practice in our Land and Day. — The needless frequenting of Taverns and Publick-Houses, and tarrying much there (particularly in the Evenings) a Practice of such dangerous Tendency, such an evil Aspect, and such a bad Report, as is not fit for those who profess the Christian Religion to indulge themselves in. It is most shocking and unpleasant to think what Mifery and Rum such a Conduct seems to threaten many with, whose best Interests I am heartily concerned for, if there be not a reasonable Check and speedy Stop put to it. What the Apostle Paul's abundant Love and Affection caused him to say of his Friends at Corinth, seems very applicable here: *I am zealous over you with a godly Jealousy; but I fear lest, by any Means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve, through his Subtilty, your Minds should be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Christ.*

The highest of my Ambition then to improve and enlarge on this Subject, being the Honour of the Lord and true Religion, with

c 1 Cor. xi. 2, 3.

B 2

your

your eternal Good; that my Endeavours herein may be watered with the divine Blessing, and, in some Measure, serviceable to answer these truly great and good Ends, as they are accompanied with my most devout Wishes, may you give a strict Attendance to what is here said; and, so far as it has the Authority of holy Scripture, and sound Reason, may it meet with obedient Ears!

What is really or imaginarily good, recommends it self answerably to the Judgment and Liking of all reasonable, thinking, and serious People: In like Manner, what is really or imaginarily evil, creates an equal Disgust and Dislike: And as of all Evils, Sin is allowed to be the worst. Whatsoever is made to appear truly so, claims its Part in the Argument, and just Treatment with you in the Consequence. And how far the Practice I am speaking of has this Appearance, and so is improper and unseemly for any Men, especially for any Professors of the Christian Religion, will be seen in the following Respects; which are reduced into so many Chapters.

Taverns and Publick-houses.

CHAP. I.

Of the Persons themselves who use this Practice.

THERE is something so solemn and sacred in the very Name of Godliness and Religion, that it commands Reverence, and carries an holy Awe with it: But Godliness and a Tavern, Religion and an Alehouse, have so much jargon and contrariety in the Sound, and inconsistency in the Names and received Notions of them, that they are not easy to reconcile in our Minds, and seem to confirm a Truth, which will yet be more plain when we view it in the following Section.

SECT. I.

Of Dishonour.

HONOUR, wherein soever it is placed, and however it is defined, or conceived of by Men of the most various Tempers, jarring Interests, and contradictory Inclinations, is however what most are inspired with a strong Desire to attain. All History, whether Sacred or Profane, plentifully furnishes us with Accounts how a Thirst after this has made Men, in every Age, not only free, but ambitious to under-

undergo Toils and Fatigues, and, with Boldness, to encounter, and with Pleasure to surmount Difficulties and Dangers, which Nature otherwise would have started at, and Reason have shrunk back and retarded from. The *Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Grecian* and *Roman Monarchies*, are lasting Witnesses, and uncontested Proofs of this, in sacred History, and the *Hectors, Caesars* and *Alexanders* in profane. Nor do our later Days want Instances of Persons of all Ranks to establish it. We see, from the Prince to the Peasant, in almost every Country, neither the Dangers of a Siege, the Fatigues of a Campaign, long and tedious Journeys, the Uneasiness of the Way, Unpleasantness of the Season, or Perils by Robbers on the Land; nor the Hazard of merciless Pyrates; besides many Losses and Crosses, most ruffling and boisterous Storms, or raging of the Waves on the Seas can quench this Thirst. The Prince with his Armies and Fleets, the Merchant and the Tradesman, in the Management of their different Concerns, are all Witnesses of this.

If Men, as such, then are inspired with so much Ambition of Honour, and greedily pursue it with so much Zeal, through all these Difficulties, the Christian and Heaven-born Soul should much more do it; as he is endued with purer Principles, and more refined Zeal. And, most of all, he should endeavour to avoid what is contrary to true Honour, as the

Practice

Taverns and Publick-houses: 7

Practice, I am speaking of is, which, in many Respects, debases Persons, to the last Degree, and exposes them to the most unmanly Actions and Behaviour: And as there are not these Difficulties or Dangers, either in shunning of a *Tavern*, or keeping out of an *Alehouse*, as there are in a close Siege, or a long Campaign, an Engagement at Sea, or a Journey by Land, and the ordering and vending of a Stock &c.

How little and mean a Spirit does it shew, and how very dishonourable and unbecoming is it for those that make a Profession of Religion, as their main and choice Business, not to have Courage enough to resist the Temptations of a *Tavern* or *Alehouse*, but to be for-
 ting there when they should be in the Field or Shop: or to come reeling and enflamed thence, when they should be in the Market, or at the *Exchange*, and prudently managing the Business of their several Callings; and more especially when they should be in the Duties of Religion, publick or private, and about the most important Concerns. This is so far from acquiring true Honour among Men, that it is the utmost Disgrace; and makes Persons the Jest and Sport of Children: nor can it fail to do so whilst the wise Man's Words are true; *As dead Flies cause the Ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking Savour: So does a little Folly him that is in Reputation for Wisdom.* If you have any Respect

^a Eccl. x. 1.

to true Honour then, and desire to have a good Character justly established among Men, carefully shun this Practice.

S E C T. II.

Of Unprofitableness.

THOUGH some Men are regardless of, and unaffected with all those Pleasures and Pastimes, or that Honour and Reputation which others dote so much on, as to pursue them at the last Hazard and Expence; yet there are few, if any, whom Profit will not move. This is a Principle of so universal an Influence and Extent, that all Ages confirm the Truth of that old Observation; *Every Man seeks his Gain from his Quarter*.

This is the prevailing Argument why Men rise up early, set up late, and eat the Bread of Care. Pains are reckon'd a Pleasure, or Amusement only, and most visible Dangers no Difficulties, where Profit answers. But to frequent *Taverns* and *Alehouses*, is so far the Reverse of all this, that (though no Body loves to be called Extravagant) it is a very lavish and expensive Practice: It is a great Spender both

1. Of Time,

2. Of Money,

3. Of Words.

Isa. lvi. 11.

1. Of

Taverns and Publick-houses.

2. n. Of *Time*. This is one of the most valuable Things that Men are entrusted with. Time is a rare Jewel, a Pearl of great Price, and a Talent that all must be accountable for their Use or Abuse of, to the great Lord. And as what Part of it is allowed to any Man upon Earth is but *short*, and it is always spending, it had need be spent well, and improved to the best Advantage; and therefore the divine Counsel is, *To redeem Time*, as the best Evidence that Persons are *Circumspect*, not as *Fools*, but as *Wise*.

I know it is commonly alledged, in favour of this Practice, by some that use it, they go there to do Business; but what a slender Account can many of them give of the many long Hours they spend there, "without dispatch of any Business at all, without doing
" or getting any real Good, either for Estate, Body or Soul; and so without answering
" any the most valuable Ends of Life. And
" the Frequency and Length of these needless
" Interviews, add not a little to the Guilt
" and Evil of them, in a Waste and Consumption of precious Time.

Our Pulse beats incessantly, our Glass runs without Intermission, and much of our Time is run off unavoidably in Sleep, necessary Refreshments of our Bodies; as in eating and drinking, and other Avocations from Business,

f 1 Cor. vii. 29.

g Eph. v. 15, 16.

So that instead of studying Methods to pass away Time, we had need to study all the ways we can to redeem it; for it will be shortly said to every one of us, *Time shall be no more*.

“ Do not then, my Friends, be so lavish of
 “ your irretrievable Hours, to waste them in
 “ Impertinences, carefully gather up the
 “ Fragments of Time, that nothing be lost.
 “ Talk not of spare Hours, and that you
 “ can afford Time, or take the Evening only
 “ to refresh your selves, after the Fatigues and
 “ Toils of the Day. These are Accounts that
 “ will not pass with your righteous Judge in
 “ the great Day. Is it nothing to squander
 “ away whole Evenings, almost every Day,
 “ in meer Sloth and Diversion? Will not the
 “ Reckoning swell high at the Year's End?
 “ If all your lost Hours were put together,
 “ how great a Sum would they amount to?
 “ surely too great to obtain the Divine Al-
 “ lowance.

Retain this also, and let it have an abiding Impression on your Minds, that besides your secular Concerns, which require Care and Diligence, you have such other weighty Business on your Hands, as calls for the most vigorous Application of all your Powers, and were sufficient of it self, to fill up the narrow Space of your short Lives. Consider, Sirs, there are

Taverns and Publick-houses. 11

many Things necessary to be done; which when Death overtakes you, you would, by no Means, have undone: These challenge the precious Hours which you pass here, *as a Tale that is told*. And further, How far is such Waste of Time from answering the noble and superior Ends of the human, and how contrary to the Christian Life? Nay, consider how fast your winged Minutes flee away, and no Moment of them can be recalled: What is said of Wisdom is applicable to Time. *It cannot be gotten for Gold, neither shall Silver be weighed for the Price thereof. It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, the precious Onyx, or the Saphire. The Gold and the Crystal cannot equal it; and the Exchange of it shall not be for Jewels of fine Gold; no Mention shall be made of Coral, or of Pearls; for the Price thereof is above Rubies.* O what would not some give, was it in their Power, for these Opportunities, which you foolishly pass away! And how soon the little Book of your uncertain, short and swift Time may be run over, and the great Volume of Eternity open to you (and whether some of you are not entered into the last Sheet, or Leaf of your Time) you cannot tell. May the Worth of Time pass be a Thought better digested by us, and the Grace of our present Day better improved than heretofore. May the very Thought

¹ Jer. vii. 10.

² Job xxviii. 15, 16, 17, 18.

of Pass-time be as abhorred as it is absurd, and not once named amongst us, as it becometh Saints. May we account our selves, as truly we are, *Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth*; and *pass the Time of our sojourning here in Fear*¹, and as those who expect, desire, and design for a better Country, *be looking for, and hastening to the coming of the Day of God*^m.

2. This Practice is a great Consumer of Money. Many Persons, who seem little to consider the Worth or Value of Time, will tell you, they know the Worth of Money, and how to value it. It were well if they would confirm this, by the best Improvement of it. Substance, as well as Time, is a Talent, which every one who has it, must give Account thereof. What Thoughts soever any of you have entertained hereof, the most undoubted Authority assures us, Men of what Rank or Condition soever, are only Stewards, and as such, accountable for all the Bounties of divine Providence: And the Time is at hand, when it will be said to each of you, *Give Account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer Steward*ⁿ. And how awful is the Thought that you should then be found to have wasted your Lord's Goods! If you say, you have Money enough, and to spare, they are empty Words, and cannot excuse you to your great Lord, And if you can allow your

¹ 1 Pet. i. 17.^m 2 Pet. iii. 12.ⁿ Luke xvi. 2.

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selves these Expences, without any Injury to your Families or Estates, and are raised above the Level of many of your Neighbours, yet still remember you are but Stewards, and so should neither pervert your Estates, nor the Gaine of your several Callings, nor any part of them to wrong Uses, (and much less to the Prejudice of your Lord's Interest) as you will answer it to him another Day. And if you persuade yourselves that you have Superfluities to employ on needless and idle Diversions, you are grossly mistaken; for God never indulges any by his Providence thus, that they should spend its Bounty on their Lusts.

You that have followed this Practice, be persuaded to make a yearly, or monthly Computation of your Expences that way; and, perhaps, the Sum will not be so inconsiderable as you imagine. Then think with your selves, whether it might not have been converted to far better Purposes, and more excellent and desirable Uses. How much more comfortable would the Reflexion be to your selves? and with how much more Honour would it transmit your Memory to Posterity, that such Articles as these were found in your Annals? So much was expended by you to redeem a poor Debtor out of Prison, whom the Rebukes of Providence had left incapable to maintain his Wife and numerous Family: So much to such an industrious Widow, who was left to struggle through the Difficulties

Difficulties of Life, with three or more small or weakly Children: Or so much to bind Apprentices, the Son of — to a good honest Tradesman, with a particular Charge to be careful of his Morals; and make Religion his daily Study. &c. Remember also the Word of our Lord, *Ye have the Poor always with you*: And out of your Abundance there should be Gleanings left for the Poor, for the Stranger, for the Fatherless, and for the Widow.

Have you Bread enough, and to spare? It is a Pity any of it should be thrown away, when there are so many who have scarce to defray Nature's necessary Expences, and would be glad of the Crumbs that fall from your Tables. Does your Cup run over? Certainly it should not run waste, when there are so many poor and thirsty ones about you, that would be glad of and thankful for the Overplus.

Consider also further, besides all the Acts of Charity you are called to perform to your poor Neighbours or Relations, or the Poor of the Household of Faith in general, there are other pious Uses to which the Filings of your Gold might be converted; ² Sacrifices, with which God is well pleased.

After all, is not this Practice an enslaving your Understandings to your Wills, and a

² Matt. xxvi. 11.

² Heb. xiii. 16.

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sacrificing your Reason to your Lusts, and Subjection to such imperious Desires as in your cooler Thoughts your own Judgments would censure, check, and controul. And it may be, many of you, who spend too much at those Interviews, have but little to spare, without actually Injuring your Families, or defrauding the Poor, or robbing God's Altar. Now therefore there is utterly a Fault among you.

It is recorded to the lasting Glory of a virtuous Woman, *The Heart of her Husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil: She will do him Good and not Evil, all the Days of her Life.* By her diligent Care and Pains, she increases her Husband's Substance, can stretch out her Hand to the Poor, and reach out her Hands to the Needy, to relieve them. She is regardless of the pinching Cold, and nipping Winter Seasons, because all her Household are clothed well: Her House is well furnished, and her Husband also is remarkably known in the Gates, when he sitteth among the Elders of the Land. But it is to the Dishonour of some Men, and even some Professors of the purest Religion, they are the Reverse of all this: They are indolent and slothful, or by reason of their needless expences, entangle their Houses and Estates, (if they have any) are in no Condition to

^s Prov. xxxi. 10. to the End.

stretch

Stretch out their Hand to the Poor, or reach forth their Hands to the Needy: Pillage their Houses, embezzle their Substance, embarrass all their Affairs, make themselves the meanest and lowest of the People: Clothe their Households with Raggs, and themselves with Weakness and Shame: Open their Mouths with Folly, and in their Tongue is the Law of Churlishness or Unkindness: Look not well to the Ways of their Households, and eat the Bread of Idleness, are justly afraid therefore, of the Winter, and shall be sorry in the Time to come. And how can the Children of such, when they rise up, call them blessed, or their Wives praise them. *Many Sons do foolishly, but these excel them all.* Be you cautioned hereby, my Friends, not to consume your Time, and squander your Money thus, by needless frequenting the Tavern or Alehouse; and least of all, in gaming there, which is childish and unmanly, and oft very sinful, as well as destructive of Families and Estates, and most common in these Places of publick Resort.

3. This Practice is lavish of Words. It is said, *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro, up and down the whole Earth, beholding both the Evil and the Good.* He penetrates into the innermost Recess of every Mind, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts, so that there is

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not a Thought in our Hearts, much less a Word in our Mouths, or a Work in our Hands, but he knows it. This Thought caused holy David to purpose *that his Mouth should not transgress*: And lest it should, he would endeavour to keep it as with a Bridle: And prays, *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditation of mine Heart be acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer* *. And promises, *My Mouth shall speak of Wisdom, and the Meditation of mine Heart shall be of Understanding* *. For he knew the Property and Practice of a righteous Man; *His Mouth speaketh Wisdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgment* †.

Now as some Places command a Reverence and Awe upon Persons, and are as a Bridle or Muzzle on their Mouths, and a Bit on their Tongues, the Tavern or Alehouse are Places more remarkable for Liberty of Speech, and Looseness of Conversation. There Projects are formed, Schemes laid, and Debates managed. There, above other Places, Men are apt to say, *With our Tongue will we prevail, our Lips are our own, who is Lord over us* ‡. Certainly if Persons were watchful over their Mouths, and kept with just Care the Door of their Lips, they would be employed in other and better Discourse than is commonly heard in these Places of Concourse, and at the Even-

* Psal. xvii. 3.

† Psal. xxxix. 1.

‡ Psal. xix. 14.

* Psal. xlix. 3.

† Psal. xxxvii. 30.

‡ Psal. xli. 4.

ing Interviews there. It is the Apostle Paul's Advice, *Let your Speech be always with Grace, seasoned with Salt, and let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the Use of Edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers*. You that use these Haunts, compare your Practice with this Advice, and there will be no need that any should tell you, *You are found wanting in the Balance of the Sanctuary*.

"Are the Subjects of Conversation in the Tavern or Alehouse, such in common as have any natural Tendency to improve you in vital Piety, or in useful Knowledge? Are you there employ'd to form Schemes how the Kingdom of Christ may be advanced? the Honour of Religion promoted? the Truths of the Gospel brought into more Repute, and better established? the Power of Godliness restored, or your Generation served according to the Will of God?" I doubt not but you will allow that empty, impertinent, and trifling, if not very sinful Discourse, is apt to insinuate it self, or to be solemnly introduced into such Meetings; and that it is a natural Transition there from what is serious, and of a religious Kind, to what is reckon'd witty and facetious, than to what is light and airy, and so to what is vicious and sinful, of an uncharitable Strain, a factious Tendency, an obscene Tincture, or a profane Aspect.

* Col. iv. 6. Eph. iv. 29.

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Is the Speech or Discourse there ordinarily such as seems to proceed out of Hearts seasoned with Grace? or has it any Tendency to edify or benefit the Hearers? Is it not rather corrupt *Communication*, and what tends to debauch the Minds, and corrupt the Morals of Men? Is it not such as you would be ashamed of, if you steadily believed, and constantly remember'd that your Judge stood at the Door, hearken'd, and heard, and was about to step in and demand of you (as once of his Disciples, when they were communing together) *What Manner of Communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye sit and are merry?*^a Or, if you thought that what passes among you in these Interviews, was all faithfully minuted down, and then repeated to you, and all the Accents observed therein, with which it was delivered (and as you reckon'd the Speech was graced) would you not blush and be confounded? But further,

Is the Temper and Disposition of Persons in these Places, and on these Occasions, such as becomes Gospel-Professors? Do they seem either designing or prepared to redeem Time there, in discoursing on what is of a serious Nature? Do not they rather (when any Thing of that Kind is accidentally introduced or advanced) meet it with a Frown, or entertain it with a Sneer, and so endeavour to banish it

^a Luke xxiv. 17.

out of the Company as a disagreeable Mixture, or Sort of Profanity? And how seldom, after a long Evening's Chat in these Places, can any Persons, upon the Reflection, conscientiously say, they are made any Thing the wiser, or better thereby? It seems rather mis-spent, if not ill-spent Time there; when some appear gay and pleasant, others witty and facetious, and some bewray Vanity and indecent Lightness. " While
 " other vain Persons have drop'd into the
 " Company, Tattlers, Busy-bodies, who bridle
 " not their Tongues, but open wide their
 " Mouths of deceitful Matters, speaking
 " Things which they ought not, against their
 " Neighbours; or when Men of corrupt Prin-
 " ciples, unruly and vain Talkers, that speak
 " Evil of the way of Truth, and are ready to
 " turn all Religion into Banter; or Men of
 " unclean Lips addicted to foolish Jestings;
 " which is not convenient: When such have
 " fallen into your Company, have you not too
 " often given an approving Laugh, or Smile,
 " upon their evil Chat, and many Times been
 " insensibly drawn in to bear a Part, and keep
 " up the vain Conversation?

Certainly this is not right, you seem herein to have forgot that the Lord hears all your Words; that there is a *Book of Remembrance written in Heaven*^b, out of which you must one Day be judged; and that the Judge saith,

^b Mal. iii. 16.

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That of every idle Word that Men shall speak, they must give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment^c; and that your Words will have a strong Influence, either to justify or condemn you: O how wasteful, lavish and unprofitable a Practice is this then!

S E C T. III.

Of Danger.

S*elf-Defence, or Self-Preservation, is both a necessary Duty and a natural Principle. It is not only ingrafted in Mankind, but so impressed on Nature it self, that even those Creatures which are destitute of intelligent and reasoning Faculties, and so move in a far lower Sphere than we, are inspired with a strong Inclination to it; and to preserve its Life, is the Endeavour of every living Thing. For Men therefore to indulge or allow themselves in any Thing that is not consistent therewith, or does not conduce thereto (according to the Measures of Understanding in them) is not only to abandon their Reason, give a Loose to their Sensuality, and put themselves on the same Level with the brutal Part of the Creation, but to act under a Disorder of Mind, worse than the Beasts that perish.*

The reasonable Creature being also capable of, and designed for a Life after this, which

^c Matt. xii. 35.

is

is to be eternal; and true Godliness or Religion both directing to, and expecting from those that embrace and profess it, that they should, by Virtue of its Power, and according to its Rules and Principles, live a spiritual Life now, in Evidence of their Hopes and Meetness for eternal Life hereafter. As Reason should cause Men diligently to keep themselves from the Paths of the Destroyer; the Wisdom of God, *which leads in the Way of Righteousness, in the midst of the Paths of Judgment^d; whose Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all whose Paths are Peace^e*, directs its Followers *to make straight Paths to their Feet^f*: And not to do so, is both below the Doctrines and Principles of true Godliness and Religion. But

How far a needless resorting to Taverns and Publick-houses slides into a criminal Neglect of this necessary and natural Duty of Self-Preservation is visible in the Danger it exposes to, both of Health and Constitution, wicked Company, and an evil and incurable Habit: There are strong Temptations to Intemperance, lascivious Thoughts, unclean Actions, and every Thing that is evil.

The Tavern and Alehouse are Rocks on which many unwary Persons have split; dangerous Precipices, whence they have been cast down head-long, and received very gantly,

^d Prov. viii. 20.

^e Chap. iii. 17.

^f Heb. xii. 13.

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if not also mortal Wounds. The wife Man's Interrogatives intimate that Men are exposed to, and insulted with all Sorts of Calamity and Misery in these Places: *Who hath Wee? who hath Sorrow? who hath Contentions? who hath Bablings? who hath Wounds without Cause? who hath Redness of Eyes?* And he answers in characterizing them who use such Haunts; *They that tarry long at the Wine; they that go to seek mix'd Wine.* And it is no Wonder such Evils overtake them, and such Inconveniences and Troubles are in their Lot; for they are as those that are bit with a Serpent, and stung with an Adder; that lay down in the midst of the Sea, or lay on the Top of a Mast, in the very last Danger, as to the whole Man, Body and Soul.

1. This Practice endangers the outward Man, as what is likely to destroy the Health, and ruin the Constitution. Health is a very valuable enjoyment: It is what the Comforts of Life in general very much depend upon. When persons are in a good State thereof, their Spirits are brisk and lively; their Countenance is pleasant; Meat, Drink and Sleep are sweet; moderate Exercise agreeable, and innocent Diversion refreshing; Company entertaining, and Friends delightful: But when Health is wanting, there is the Reverse of all this; the Spirits are flat; Countenance dejected;

Prov. xliii. 29. — Though they be as strong as a Serpent, or as swift as a Adder, they shall not be able to hurt thee.

Looks

Looks mesgre; Meat and Drink unwelcome or unsavoury; and Sleep is either banished, or not refreshing; any Exercise, or even Diversion is a Toil; Company burdensome; and Friends unpleasant (and most of all so, when Persons Presumption, Excess, or Inadvertence, have occasion'd this.) And as *Health* may be impaired, or the best *Constitution* undermined and shattered, and so this dull Scene brought on, by Excess of any Kind and Violence offered to one's Nature; nothing is more like to do it than *frequenting the Tavern or Alehouse, and spending much Time there.* As you value *Health* then, and an untainted *Constitution*, as you would give Nature her full Scope, and have her exert her whole Force and Vigour, suppress the latent Seeds of Diseases, and starve many burdensome Distempers; let Temperance and Sobriety have your Care, and shun the Practice I here speak of; for however you may either boast of, or trust to your *Constitutions*, or your Caution and Watchfulness, as Persons not easily, or ever overtaken with Excess: There are few, if any, who can oft take live Coals in their Bosom, and not be hurt by them. It is an old Observation, and therefore a common Saying; *The Pitcher that goes oft to the Well, usually returns broken at last.* So Men, who are oft heedlessly on false and deceitful Ground, are usually at last bit, as with a Serpent, or stung, as with an Adder: Though they long continue at, and pursue the
Liquor,

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Liquor; it will at last take its Turn, and pursue or enflame them ^h.

2. There is Hazard in these Places, *to meet with evil Company.* Taverns and Publick-houses are open for all Sorts of Persons to resort to; and as there are many Persons of black Character, in the Scripture Account, and many whose Pride, Indolence, or extravagant Tempers and Notions, prevent their diligent Application to any lawful and commendable Employ; and many who are Tattlers and Busy-bodies, that delight to hear and tell facetious and witty Stories, (as they call them) or to enquire into, and make their Remarks and Censures on other Persons and their Affairs; which no ways concerns them. And as these Places are seldom clear of some such Company, and every Person reckons himself as at home; there, in a Place where he may speak his Mind freely, without any Exception for his so doing; there is not only a Likelihood to contract an Acquaintance there, but an Acquaintance which is dangerous to infect with their Counsels or Examples, and to draw others into their pernicious Ways; for the Scripture will always be true, which saith, *Evil Communications corrupt good Manners* ⁱ; and some Persons have rued, if not cursed, the Day when they needlessly went there; for the fatal Influence of the Com-

^h Isa. v. 11.

ⁱ 2 Cor. xv. 33.

pany they have met with in these Places, and the pernicious Courses they have been led into there.

3. You are here also in Danger to *contract an evil and incurable Habit*. Use, we say, is a second Nature, and Custom creates such a Likeing to any Thing, tho' ever so evil, that it takes away the Sense of the Evil in it, and draws Persons on with irresistible Force in the same; it clouds the *Understanding*, blinds and bewilders the *Judgment*, and hence easily captivates the *Will* and *Affections*; so that human Power is too weak a Defence against it; it cannot withstand it, or turn the Biass, as is explained in the Men of *Judah*, and in the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, where the Lord says, *It is as possible for the Ethiopian to change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots, as it is for the Men to do Good, who are accustomed to do Evil*^k. “ The Powers and Faculties
“ of the Mind, as well as the Organs of the
“ Body, gain Strength by Action and Exercise,
“ as by the want of it they grow weak and
“ feeble: And Custom, which is a second
“ Nature, will, by Degrees, increase our Re-
“ lish or Disposition to be pleased with any
“ Enjoyments that are frequently desired, and
“ often repeated; while the Sense of other
“ Pleasures, with which these are inconsistent,
“ shall, through Disuse, be much weaken'd
“ and impaired^l.

^k Jer. xiii. 23.

^l Thoughts of moral Virtue, &c. p. 47.

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And when Men have long habituated and accustomed themselves to these *Tavern and Ale-house Interviews*, you oft see their Minds and Hearts are so closely attached thereto, that important and necessary Business is, for the Sake thereof, neglected elsewhere: But you have very seldom seen or known any who have been able to leave off these long used Haunts: *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick: They have beaten me, and I felt it not. When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again*^m. “ This Verse contains the last, “ but not the least of those Evils, which “ Drunkenness brings upon Men, viz. Hard- “ ness of Heart, and an obstinate persisting in “ an evil Course; while, in the drunken Fit, “ a Man scarce feels the Blows he receives: “ But this his Insensibility is so far from being “ his Security, that it exposes him to still “ greater Dangers; since it renders him Fool- “ hardy, and ready to venture upon any “ Thing. *When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* The Drunkard’s Throat is still “ dry; and, like *the barren Womb, and the “ Grave*, cries, *Give, Give*. Nothing can, in “ a more lively Manner, describe the stupid “ Frame to which this Sin reduces the Mind, “ than such an Expression; as though the “ Drunkard only wished to recover from his “ Sleep, that he might ply his Cups with fresh

^m Prov. xxiii. 35.

" Vigour : He esteems it the chief Happiness
 " of Life, and is afresh desirous of approving
 " himself a Champion of *Bacchus* ; a Cham-
 " pion in as bad a Cause as any Man can pos-
 " sibly engage in ! See the bewitching Na-
 " ture of Sin ! One would have expected to
 " have heard, When I awake, I will never
 " seek it more, and am heartily sorry that
 " ever I acted so foolish a Part to seek it here-
 " tofore : But alas, nothing of all this ; He
 " returns with the Dog to his Vomit, and with
 " the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in
 " the Mire ". Generally speaking, the Drun-
 " kard will be a Drunkard still ;" (so he that
 is accustomed to frequent *Taverns* and *Ale-
 houses*, will frequent them still,) " When once
 " Persons have contracted an Habit of this
 " Sin, there is scarce any, it is harder to re-
 " claim them from : Every Time their drun-
 " ken Companions, or the Liquor presents it
 " self, they are in the utmost Danger of a
 " Relapse : A Beckon of the Hand, or a
 " Wink of the Eye, from one of their sinful
 " Associates, have greater Weight with them
 " than all the Laws of God and Man to re-
 " strain them ; and then every new Relapse
 " renders their full Recovery more improba-
 " ble ; I had almost said desperate °.

If you would walk safe, walk circumspect-
 ly ; look round about you ; consider well

° 2 Per. ii. 22.

° The Folly and Danger of Drunkenness, p. 24, 25, 26.

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where Danger lies, and shun the Places where there are so many Snares and Devices, so many Emissaries and Advocates of the Enemy of your Safety. "Remember *Peter* got his Fall " by Presumption: You have to do with an " Adversary that is too vigilant to lose any " Opportunity, or forego any Advantage put " into his Hands". *Be not ignorant of his Devices, lest he get an Advantage against you*. And though some who have been wounded here, by a hasty Flight to *Gilead*, a wise and home Application of the *Balm of the Physician* there, have had the *Poison of the envenomed Dart* suck'd out, so that their Wound has not gangered, and prov'd fatal to their Souls; yet the Wound has scarce been closed, or the *Impression* removed all their after Days. Be not *high minded* then; but fear and forget not that the wisest of Men hath said, *He that walketh with wise Men shall be wise: But a Companion of Fools shall be destroy'd*.^a

4. You are in danger here to be drawn into a Snare, to your precious and immortal Souls. There is no Place ordinarily so full of Temptations as the *Tavern* and *Alehouse*; *Fornicators, Adulterers, Thieves, Revilers, Drunkards, Extortioners, Sabbath-breakers*, and the whole *List of Sinners*, are apt to herd there. There you are surrounded with Temptations, and so must be in the last Danger to be drawn into,

^a 2 Cor. ii, 11.

^a Prov. xiii, 20.

or make too near Approaches to *Intemperance, lascivious Thoughts, filthy Conversation, or unclean Actions*; and think not your own Strength or Conduct, your Prudence or wise Management of your selves, a sufficient Shelter, or irresistible Proof against all the Batteries that these erect; for as *Whoredom, so Wine, and new Wine take away the Heart*^r: And as Men are unwarily drawn from a transient Chat over the Glass, to tarry long at the Wine: If you are not overcome with the Liquor, that will not excuse you to frequent and spend your Time in such Places; for there is an equal *Wo to them that be mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength, to mingle strong Drink, as to them that rise up early in the Morning, that they may follow strong Drink, and continue till Night, till Wine enslave them*^t. O deliver your Darling then by a speedy Flight from the Places of such Danger; and let a Concern for your Souls as precious and immortal, be more visible.

S E C T. IV.

Of Hurtfulness.

AS every Thing operates according to its Nature and Energy, such as is the Nature of the Action, such you may expect the

^r Hof. iv. 11.^t Isa. v. 11, 12.

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Effects and Consequences of it will be. *A good Tree bringeth not forth corrupt Fruit: Neither doth a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit. And a good Man, out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is good—so on the contrary: And by their Fruit you shall know them.* But as what is said already, shews the frequenting of *Taverns*, and other *Publick-houses*, a Weed or Root of Bitterness, which, as it grows up will offend many: So our own Observation confirms that it has unavoidably brought many incurable Distempers or Diseases on some, whereof they have languished and pined away; Poverty, Beggary, and almost all outward Misery on others: And many more, it is feared, bleed of the spiritual Wounds which their best Interests and Concerns have received there. Whence some have bespoken the Professors of the purest Religion, thus,

“ O Christians! do not you sensibly find it warring against your Souls, and hindering you from close Walk with God? The mis-
 “ spense of precious Time, vain Discourse,
 “ the presumptuous venturing among the Oc-
 “ casions of Sin, &c. are they not such Faults
 “ as grieve the Holy Spirit of God? And oh!
 “ how many have, by such Things, sinned
 “ away divine Restraints, been at last given
 “ over to their own Lusts, and left off to be
 “ wise, and to do good?

* Luke vi. 43, 45.

This

32 Of needless frequenting

This Practice naturally tends to debauch the Mind, and corrupt the Morals, and every way to unfit Men for Communion with God, and what is of a spiritual and heavenly Nature: It is hence a *Practice hurtful*,

1. To the *Persons* who use it.
2. To their *spiritual and best Interest*; their *Souls* and their *Graces*.
3. To good *Order* in their *Families*.
4. To the *Duties of Religion* in general.

1. *It is an hurtful Practice to the Persons of them who use it.* In *Wine, Ale*, or other spirituous Liquors, there is Excess, a going beyond the due Bounds, in surfeiting or over-charging of Nature; whence come many natural Infirmities, Weaknesses and Ailes; as the over-loading, over-pressing, or over-charging of any Thing, endangers it, and is hazardous to break, burst, or some way to disable and hurt it: So we read of *Excess of Wine*, and *Excess of Riot* ^u, and a Dehortation therefrom, or a cautionary Advice, *not to be drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess* ^x. And as Excess in this way is the Mother or Nurse of many hurtful and incurable Distempers on the Body, so Men are bereaved of the Comforts of Life, and the Sweet of Enjoyment in what they possess, and under the Confinement of a dark and distressed Scene, constrained to spin out their Days in complicated Grief and Misery. And

^u 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.

^x Eph. v. 18.

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if some, who know not how to set themselves any Limits, but use these Practices with unbounded Freedom, are not easily overtaken with Excess therein; yet they suffer thereby, and have many unavoidable Troubles and Inconveniences brought on them thereby.

2. It is hurtful to their spiritual and best Interests, to their Souls and their Graces.

The Soul is the spiritual, most noble and refined Part in Man; this, in regard of its excellent Faculties, raises him higher than the Level, and gives him a Precedence above the brutal Part of the Creation. This Part therefore claims his best Care, and his utmost Concern, and its Welfare (the Loss of which could not be compensated with the Gain of the whole World) should have his constant Study and Application; but yet no few live as if they either knew not that they carry'd such a valuable Treasure in their mortal Bodies, and were entrusted with such a rare Jewel; or as if all their noble Powers were drown'd and buried in Sense, and they were, after a few Turns in this World, *to die as the Beasts that perish*, making no Provision for, or having any real Concern about the after World, and the most suitable and adequate Bliss of their Souls there. And of all the besotted Part of Mankind, who are drenched in divers Lusts and Vanities, none seem to carry their Mark and Name in their Foreheads more plain than

F

these

these who drown their Senses in Liquor, and frequent Taverns and Alehouses, a Practice which has slain its Thousands in many Ages, and doubtless, has its ten Thousands now bleeding at its Feet.

Are not the mispending of precious Time, frothy, earthly, and vain Discourse, the presumptuous venturing among the Temptations to, and Occasions of Sin, &c. what some have been given over to *their own Hearts Lusts* for, and to *walk in their own Councils*? a greater Evil than which can scarce be conceived: Hence some who have formerly given the most promising Hopes of their after Honour and Usefulness, both in the World and in the Church, when they have followed these Courses a while, have been abandon'd to all Sin, led by the vilest and most filthy Lusts, the most corrupt and brutal Inclinations, that either evil Council or Examples can impose upon, or prompt a bewildred Judgment or a deceived Heart unto; and so they have defeated all the once promising Expectations from them, and have left off to be wise, and to do good. And dare you, O Christians! follow their Courses, and tread in their Steps? Do not you know that Death is in the Pot? And do not you sensibly find that this Practice wars against your Soul, and hinders your close Walk with God?

Taverns and Publick-houles. 35

How lawful, innocent, or profitable soever some Diversions may be in themselves, and moderately used; any carnal Diversion too often repeated, or too eagerly pursued, has a destructive Tendency and Influence to sensualize the Mind, dissolve and weaken the noble Powers of the Soul, discourage and damp pious Inclinations, and indispose Men to all that is serious and truly good. Do not you find that any idle unprofitable Discourse (much more an Evening spent in the same) does unfit you for the Duties of your Closet, unhinge your Mind from what is serious, and fill you with Confusion and Distraction in the best Performances there? Certainly to spend the Evening in the *Tavern* or *Alehouse* (where Men are also oft heated with Liquor) must be worse. Thus Men do not only streighten themselves for Leisure to perform religious Duties; and so either wholly neglect their Closet, or crowd up their Duties there in haste, and without a becoming Awe and Seriousness; so make the most effectual Method to create an Averseness to these Duties, and to run them over in a loose, carnal, superficial, and sensual Manner, to the Dishonour of God, and Wrong of their own Souls; which can never thrive so long as private Devotions are neglected or trifled in.

Closet Duties, such as Prayer, reading the Scriptures, Meditation, &c. conscientiously and duly attended to, and improved, are some

Of needless frequenting
 of the choicest Means of Growth in Knowledge and all Grace; and the Wise will study to redeem as much Time as they can for these.

Judge now in your own selves, my Friends, whether the Time spent in the *Tavern* or *Alehouse* (especially the more peculiar Season of Devotion, the Evening) would not be better spent, and turn to a more comfortable Account at the Day of Reckoning, if much of it was devoted to sacred Retirement, as if it was spent in religious Associations, in reading the holy Scriptures, Conferences about the Things of God, your Souls, and the World to come; or Endeavours after Reformation, as Prayer one with another, and other Means of your Instruction and Edification, in what is of the most Consequence; or if some Part of it was taken up about History, or any pleasant and useful Science, by Means whereof the Judgment may be informed, the Mind cultivated and improved, and the Man better qualified and furnished for greater Services in his Generation, or in Christian Visits among your sober and religious Neighbours; which, wisely managed and improved, are of no small Advantage to the Souls of godly Persons and their Graces; while it is a standing Truth, *As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth the Face of a Man his Friend* *. And as it was Heaven's

* Prov. xxvii. 17.

Delight,

Taverns and Publick-houses. 37

Delight, so it was the laudable Practice of the Godly in old Time, *to speak often one to another*.*

3. To frequent *Taverns* and *Publick-houses*, (especially to spend the Evenings there) is a Practice *hurtful to good Order in Families*.

As God has endowed Men with the Power of Reason; so that they can deliberate or consider a Matter, argue upon a Subject, and draw the most natural and rational Conclusions from the Premises they lay down; (a Power that the other Creatures on their Orb have not) he justly expects, that in every Thing they do, they should shew themselves Men; and so not be enslaved to, and led by any sensual Appetite or Inclination; but act as under the Government of Reason. And as Religion does not destroy but improve Reason, and put it under the Conduct of an infallible Guide and Instructor, those who profess it, are equally expected to act as under the Power and Influence of its Virtue, and to observe those Rules which Religion prescribes, and are in the Scriptures of Truth laid down; and this not only in a private Respect, or in a personal View, but also in a relative Sense, and Exercise of the social Passion and Affection. And as both Religion and Reason enjoin those who are set over others in a Gospel or Civil Sense (and thereby have the Charge of others com-

* Mal. iii. 16.

mitted to them) with Prudence to establish, and with Strictness to observe good Order, which is both the Band and Beauty, the Guard and Safety of any Relation: So those who have Families under their Care, should see well to them.

The Testimony that God has given of *Abram*, to his eternal Honour, as the declared Reason of his Freedom with him, and why he so intimately imparted to him his Purpose, concerning what he was about to do on the wicked City of *Sodom*, is expressed in these Words, *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him; and they shall keep the Way of the Lord to do Justice and Judgment, &c.*^b And it is enjoined all those who have Families under their Care, to do the like. *And these Words which I command thee, saith the Lord, shall be in thine Heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine House; and when thou walkest by the Way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up:*^c This is a Part of that good Order every one should observe in their Families. But how do these see to their Families, and what good Order is there like to be in that House or Family, where the Master is oft abroad, and oft in the *Tavern or Alehouse* all the Evening (which is the best Time to get the Family together,

^b Gen. xviii. 17—19.

^c Deut. vi. 6, 7.

Taverns and Publick-houses. 39

and to instruct, admonish, and talk with them?)
“ Are not the Children and Servants like to
“ wander from home? And will not they be
“ tempted to tarry out late, at least some-
“ times when the Heads of the Family do it?
“ And if one Head does it, will not the other
“ be apt to do it also? But what Confusion
“ must there needs be in such a House! And
“ how must Disorders grow in a Town where
“ there are many such Houses, as it were,
“ left desolate! How much more if it were
“ the universal Practice, and almost every Fa-
“ mily were usually at Evening in such a
“ Case! The Head's abroad, and the young
“ People abroad; some here, and others
“ there; and all upon their Diversions! What
“ a melancholy Gloom must this cast upon
“ the Town! How doleful the Appearance!
“ Can you bear the Thoughts of it! But now
“ why may not all run into the Practice, if
“ it be justifiable in so many, and such Per-
“ sons as do allow themselves in it? And who
“ knows how extensive the Infection of your
“ ill Example may be? Surely then a Regard
“ to the Welfare and Reputation of the Town,
“ a Reverence for Order, as well as a serious
“ View to the Benefit of your Children and
“ Servants, should constrain you to leave off
“ the evil Custom. And indeed, a just Re-
“ spect for your Consorts should influence you
“ to spend the Evening at home, as much as
“ necessary Business will allow. May we not,

“ in this Case, apply that Admonition of the
 “ Apostle Peter, *Ye Husbands dwell with your*
 “ *Wives, according to Knowledge, giving Honour*
 “ *unto the Wife, as unto the weaker Vessel, and*
 “ *as being Heirs together of the Grace of Life,*
 “ *that your Prayers be not hindered*.”

“ The Apostle Paul exhorts Parents and
 “ Masters to love their *Wives and Children,*
 “ and to give unto their Servants that which
 “ which is just and equal; and (therefore) to
 “ continue in Prayer, and watch in the same
 “ with Thanksgiving; *withal, praying**, pray-
 “ ing together, or jointly, as the Word in the
 “ Original might be rendered. It is a Pre-
 “ cept for joint Prayers in the Family; Pray-
 “ ers of the Husband with his Wife and
 “ Household, that the Apostle Peter was de-
 “ sirous should not be hindered; and there-
 “ fore exhorts Men to *dwell with their Wives*
 “ *according to Knowledge, giving Honour to*
 “ *them.*

But it is beyond all Dispute, these Persons fail of a due Respect to their Consorts; if they don't also do Justice to the Wife of their Bosom, who prefer the sordid Entertainments of the *Tavern or Alehouse*, to the Pleasure of their Company, and fall into an unhappy Method to hinder their Family Prayer, (a Duty which no Christian Parent or Master of a Family can live in the Neglect of, without bit-

* 1 Pet. iii. 7.

2 Col. iv. 3.

Taverns and Publick-houses. 41

ter Reflexions in himself; when serious, and Reproach of his Profession) and if it does not create Strife and Contention at home, it must necessarily cause Uneasiness and wild Confusion, distress the Minds, and hurt the Devotions of the Household: And more so, if they tarry out late in the Evening, as it is feared most of those do sometimes, that use this Practice.

4. It is a Practice hurtful to the Duties of Religion in general. For when a great Part of Time, (especially the Evening, the best Season for Family Duty) is spent, as usual, at these Places, in Vanity, unsavory, idle, and unprofitable Discourse, the Mind is usually unfitted by it for the Duties of Religion, and there is no liking to, no Heart or Pleasure in them; so they are either wholly neglected, or hurry'd over in a slight, formal, drowsy Manner, and the Sacrifice thereof lame, lean, and unpleasant to the Lord; who has said, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me*.^e When the Strength and Spirits of the Mind have been laid out in the World in the Day, and wasted on trifling Diversions in the Evening: What remains but Indifference and Lukewarmness for Objects of a religious Concern? As you may observe those Trees that run out into abundance of grosser Shoots, seldom bring much valuable Fruit,

^e Levit. x. 3.

42 Of needless frequenting

“ because all the best Juices go to maintain
“ these useless Luxuriances.

“ This Practice is very unlike what you
“ read of *David* the Man of God, and of the
“ People of *Israel*.— After the Labours of the
“ Day, in removing the Ark; *All the People*
“ departed, every one to his House: Then *Da-*
“ vid returned to bless his Household. And
“ would it not be well for you, O my Friends,
“ if you would go and do likewise! Instead
“ of going from the Warehouse, the Shop,
“ or Field, to the *Tavern* or *Alehouse*; from
“ Business to unsavory Diversions! Had you
“ not better return (with *David*) to bless your
“ Households, even to bless them with your
“ Prayers, and Counsels, and good Conversa-
“ tion in Christ! O that there were such an
“ Heart in every Householder, that there might,
“ in its Season, be more of a sitting in the
“ House! That they would keep their Foot,
“ and look better to the Ways of their Hou-
“ shold, that it might be well with them,
“ and with their Children for ever!

Thus a Circumspection in your Walk, Watch-
fulness over your Conduct, and careful shun-
ning the Practice of frequenting *Taverns* and
Alehouses, is not only a likely means to preserve
the Mind from being debauched, and the Mo-
rals from being corrupted, and so from many
Inconveniencies on your Bodies, on your spi-

ritual and best Interests, your Souls and their Graces, and the good Order in your Families; but on the Duties of Religion in general; and so you escape a hurtful Practice.

S E C T. IV.

Of Remorse of Conscience.

REMORSE of Conscience is a serious and sorrowful Reflexion, or looking back on one's by-past Opinions, Words, or Ways, under a conscientious Sense of some Error, Evil, Misconduct or Escape therein; somewhat that is justly culpable and worthy of Blame, or an inward and most piercing Grief on such a Reflexion. This is a Work or Thing so unpleasant in it self, and every way so contrary to our Nature, that no wise Man would choose to lay a Foundation for such a severe Task; the usual Occasions of which are not the Result of rational and manly Sentiments, Words, or Actions, but of sordid, sensual, and brutal Inclinations. It is affirmed therefore, by some, " The Approbation of a
" Man's own Mind, the Consciousness of his
" own Virtue and Merit, has been reckoned,
" of all the Blessings of Life, to be one of
" the dearest and most inestimable: The best
" and the noblest Part of Mankind having al-

^a Thoughts of Moral Virtue, pag. 67.

“ ways valued it above all things else in the
 “ World, sooner choosing to die than violate
 “ their Honour, or do one single Action that
 “ is villanous or base, as well knowing that
 “ even Life it self, when this is gone, is but
 “ a wretched thing, hardly worth the keep-
 ing.” And the Scripture Worthies have no less
 Opinion of it, when they say, *Our Rejoicing is
 this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in
 Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly
 Wisdom, but by the Grace of God we have had
 our Conversation in the World*¹. And by the
 same Force of Reason, we may say the chief
 Accent of any Person's Sorrow and Grief, is
 the Consciousness of his Error and Offence:
 It fills the Mind with black Horror and wild
 Despair, on the Apprehension of an After-
 reckoning or Account: This was *Cain's black
 Mark*, and what made him say, *his Punish-
 ment was more than he could bear, and every
 one who saw him would slay him*². He did Evil,
 and Sin lay at his Door, and Conscience dog-
 ged him with it wherever he went, and pur-
 sued him so, that every one who saw him,
 might read Guilt in his Face, and perceive he
 was a self-condemned Miscreant. And if our
 Heart condemn us, God is greater than our
 Heart, and knoweth all Things: But if our
 Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence
 towards God³.

¹ 2 Cor. i. 12.² Gen. iv. 14.³ 1 John iii. 20, 21.

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And however Conscience, that faithful Admonisher and Reprover of Men, may now be misled or misinformed, or by continued Insults, Affronts, and resolute Courses or Shifts, contrary to its Checks, be baffled, provoked, and silenced, or seared as with a hot Iron, and refuse to do its Office, so suffer Men to go on in their sinful and evil Ways, without his Controul, for a Time; yet this Lion will scarce always lay dormant, or hold his Peace; but on some Occasions, in some Circumstances, or under some Providences, he usually awakes, rouzes, and causes his Voice to be heard by the most Profligate, &c. even in this Life. And as ungodly Courses make Conscience an Enemy, as an Enemy he usually meets ungodly Persons in the Straits; and so when they are old, weak, and infirm, makes them to possess the Sins of their Youth, and the Iniquity of their Heels to overtake them. The Consciousness of this, and the Hints they have this way, are what many shew when they seek to stop their Ears to his Calls; and lest they should hear his Counsel, and hearken to his Reproofs, run to the *Tavern* or *Alehouse*, and endeavour to make their Ears heavy, and numb their other Senses with the Entertainments there.

And if this has been any of your Practice, yet consider, there may a Time and Circumstances be, when you cannot take this Method; though you may pass off all the Reproofs,

proofs of your Conscience now with a vain Laugh, an idle Story, or a full Pot, when growing Distempers confine you in your own Houses, Chambers, or Beds, and grim Death approaches and hastens his solemn Visit; when your Lives hover over the Grave, and your trembling Souls sit on your quivering Lips, ready to take their Flight into a World unknown, and to ascend before the just Tribunal of a righteous and impartial Judge, who now *ponders your Ways, and counts all your Steps*^m; and *who will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*ⁿ.

Let this be an abiding Thought with you, that you are hastning to the Grave, the House appointed for all Living; that you are ever upon the awful Brink of the great Eternity; and as your Times are not in your own Hands, and you know not when, where, or under what Circumstances Death will serve his Arrest upon you, and you shall receive the Summons *to set your House in Order, and die*, think whether the *Tavern or Alehouse* is a Place, or the Company and Conversation there such; and where you would be willing to meet Death, and make your Exit from the World! And what if the Lord should, some Evening or other, say to you there, *This Night shall your Soul be required of you* °.

^m Job xxxi. 14.

ⁿ Ecclef. xii. 14.

^o Luke xii. 20.

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O if your Conscience is awake then, how stern will it look ! What Lessons of Terror will it read unto you then, and how fearful and rending his Remorses ! Now he will roar on you as a Lion ; and you have to cry out that your Soul is among Lions, when he shall tell you, *You have hated Instruction, and your Heart hath despised Reproof* ; and cause you to wish in vain, that you had obeyed your Teachers, and inclined your Ear to them that instructed you. Be wise now in time, and shake off such Courses by Repentance and Reformation, if you may happily prevent these bitter Remorses, and sad Reflexions.

I shall conclude this Chapter, with an Observation concerning Moral Virtue and Happiness.

“ When we reflect upon our own Conduct,
“ the continual Joy which results from the
“ Consciousness of having done well, is a lasting
“ Reward of Virtue : But whoever varies
“ from this moral Rectitude, will be always
“ self-condemned ; and that Horror and Remorse
“ which accompanies the Reflexion
“ upon wicked Actions, will destroy all inward
“ Peace and Satisfaction.

P Prov. v. 12, 13.

C H A P.

CHAP. I.

Of others in general.

THE Power of the social Passion, where with Men are endued, should persuade them, as Men, (much more as Professors of the Christian Doctrine and Religion) next to the Glory of God, and their own Happiness, to consult the Good of others: But needlessly to frequent *Taverns* and *Publick-houses*, and to spend much Time there, is so improper and unseemly for them, that it is quite the Reverse of all this, both in its Example and the Influence of it.

S E C T. I.

Of Example.

EXample, of what kind soever, has a very powerful and attracting Force in it; so much that even some Persons who have formerly professed much Zeal for God, their own Souls, and the eternal World, have dared to risque all upon it: And it is strongly to be suspected, that (even in our knowing Land and Day, when and where the Gospel-Sun makes so near Approaches to his Meridian

2

Height,

Taverns and Public-houses. 49

Height, and suffers so little Eclipse). This is the main, if not all the Argument that some Persons of high Character have for their Faith and Practice, in what is of a religious kind, and the last Importance. They have the Example of Men of Piety, Learning, and Merit: Or, as the Woman of Samaria, have only to say, *Our Fathers worshipped in this Mountain*. When the Want of all solid Argument and Scripture Reasoning, leaves room for Christ's Censure and Reproof of them, as of the Samaritan, (who had no divine Institution or Command to plead for the Practice,) *Ye worship ye know not what*. This Force does Example carry with it; though it silently whispers, if it does not strongly inculcate that every Person should be well persuaded, that whatever he believes or practises, especially in Religion, is according to, and warranted by the Holy Scriptures: For the Corruption of human Nature is such, that it inclines Men more especially to observe bad Examples; and as it is their Darling and usual Protection, it is a Root of Bitterness, that wherever it springs up, is usually attended with very hurtful and pernicious Effects; it is apt to defile, if not also to destroy many. It is like the noisome Pestilence, which "silently assaults Men, and yet with a mighty Power; and mortally wounds almost before they are aware of it." Though you can not well them to the "Exceeds of it, as there not exceeding."

H

" we

we suspect the Danger: especially bad Examples set by Persons of Note, and in superior Rank; or making a peculiar Profession of Religion, or pretending to be Men of higher Knowledge, &c. do carry with them an extraordinary Contagion. By ill Examples, whole Communities have sometimes been endangered, and Cities brought into a Snare; by this means often one Offender destroys much Good."

As the social Affection then that Mankind are Masters of, is both the Bond and Beauty, the Defence and Safety of Fellowship; it inclines them to a charitable Concern for the Good of others in general; and more so, where Nature's Bonds, or more immediate Relation and Trust, subjoin their Voice and Plea; as those of the same Community, or in Nature's Relation, or of the same Family.

But this Practice, and most of all in Parents and Masters of Families, is so remote from any shew of this, that it has the most contrary Effects: *To bander the Wicked, and expose their Families who practise it.*

1. The Wicked, who are still under the Power of Error and Unbelief, are apt to encourage, if not also to justify themselves and each other, by the Example of others, especially their Betters, against the known Laws of Virtue and Wisdom.

" Though you run not with them to the same Excess of Riot, yet is there not exceeding

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“Exceeding Hazard that your so far Gambol-
 “ing with them will embolden them in their
 “Wickedness?”

Don't think that either your Knowledge or
 Parts, or fairest Pretences to Religion, where-
 in you may excel others, can be any sufficient
 Plea for this Practice, or Protection to you
 herein. For thus Men of professed Know-
 ledge and Experience above others, expose
 themselves to be the Ridicule of the Profane,
 the Laughter and Song of the Drunkards;
 though the Grief and Shame of their sober,
 religious, and thinking Friends, if they are
 not also Partakers of the Sin of others.

There does not seem to be a more likely
 Means to harden Sinners; wicked, ignorant,
 and unexperienced Persons in their most scan-
 dalous Haunts, or to encourage them in Ex-
 cess and debauched Practices there, than often
 to find such as profess to know more and bet-
 ter than themselves do, in the Places of their
 Resort, and sitting on the Drunkard's Bench,
 or in the Seat of the proud Scorners. Is not
 this in some measure to *cast in your Lot with*
them, and to have one Purse?

2. This is a Practice, that the Families of
 those who use it are much exposed By. There
 needs no other Argument to persuade us that
 those who have others under their Charge,
 should act worthy of their Observation; than

Prov. 1. 14

to remember how frequently the pious and honourable Examples of their worthy and religious Ancestors, their Parents or Masters, are mentioned with Reverence and Commendation by their Children, and others who have been educated under their Care, whose own vicious Inclinations, nevertheless, don't suffer them to follow those worthy Examples.

But so far is the needless frequenting of Taverns and Alehouses, (especially in the Evening) from being worthy of the Observation of Families, that it lays them naked to many Snares and Temptations, and leads them into the utmost Danger: For if the Father or Master is abroad, and so far regardless of his Family, as to sit where it may be expected there are vain Persons, and Excess, and sinful Discourse, if not many sinful Practices also. If the Mistress, the Children, or Servants, don't fall into some evil way of Thinking, to receive and entertain some Principles that tend to corrupt both their Minds and Morals, some vain Discourse, or hurtful and disorderly Practices among themselves, there is danger of evil Persons intruding into their Company, and this being oft repeated, (the Father or Master frequently abroad) there is Hazard that some in the Family, at least, may be seduced by their Conversation and Example into the Paths of the Destroyer: Nay, are there not some within our Knowledge that are so already? Either the Wives fallen into
the

the Husbands dishonourable and infectious Practices, or the Childrens and Servants Minds so poisoned, that they are hardly kept under any Restraint in their Morals, and so a blacker Scene is threatned still by the Force of this Contagion.

However, as Examples are not only for Observation, but some of them also for Imitation, so even these that are evil have a wondrous Power in them that way.

SECTION II.

Of the Influence of Example.

AS there are no Arguments to be used against Demonstration, Demonstration is the most forcible and conclusive: And as the Practice or Conversation is the most demonstrative Evidence of the Judgment and Principles, and the Influence these have upon the Mind and Will, which regulate and govern the Life, the Practice of any Person is the most forcible way for him to argue others into his Judgment or way of Thinking, and thereby into his way of Acting too. For as it is happy for that Man who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth, who acts not inconsistent with, or contrary to his inward Judgment, and established Principles, and

^f Rom. xiv. 22.

puts no Force upon his Conscience. For *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*; so whatever Arguments Persons make use of to convince others, are never like to be effectual and successful to such an End, when their own Practices and Examples do not confirm, but destroy the same. And the Example is usually of more extensive Influence than all other Arguments, as Mens Practices are more observable than their Principles.

To reduce this to our present Subject, unnecessarily to frequent *Taverns* and *Alehouses*, and to spend much Time there, is a Practice very likely to be of fatal Influence on others; especially on those who are Inferiors, or under the Rule and Government of those who practise it. This is so universally believed, and observed, as to become proverbial, *Like Prince like People*; or *Like Priest like People*; i. e. any Principle or Practice usually flourishes according to its Patronage. If the Prince is indolent, effeminate, vicious, and lascivious, the Court and the People are usually so too; or if the Minister will profane the Sabbath, game, swear, and get drunk, the People are not only guilty of such Excesses, but support themselves therein by his Example. (And to their Reproach, some Persons have so far renounced all Seriousness, and are so hardened in Wickedness, they use all the Endeavours

* Rom. xiv. 23.

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they can to betray their Superiors or Leaders into dishonourable Practices and Excess, that they may glory in it afterwards, and screen themselves in the same.) And can any other be expected of those, who are Parents or Masters of Families, and indulge themselves in this Practice, than that their Families should follow their Example?

Every thinking Person allows, that what Ideas are first formed in the Mind, and what Principles are first rooted in the Judgment, have an abiding Force, and great Influence on all the After-Life and Conversation: And there is no more effectual way to create Ideas, and establish Principles in young Persons, than the Advice and Example of their Elders; and especially those who have Power and Authority over them, and to whose Charge they are committed, both by the Rules of Nature and Scripture. Children and Inferiors conceive so much of an hereditary Argument in the Example of Parents and Superiors, that it must be a Matter of greatest Worth, Power, and Influence, that can rescue Persons from the Force and Contagion of their bad Example: And it is what St. Peter thinks worthy to be ascribed to the Blood of Christ alone, when he says, *We were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain Conversation, received by Tradition from your Fathers, but*

" 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19.

with

with the precious Blood of Christ. The Advice of the wisest of Men is apt here; *Train up a Child in the Way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* This Truth is confirmed by the common Care, Desire, and Endeavour of Persons, in all Places and Circumstances, to have their Children or other Relations, and what Youth soever else they particularly respect and wish well to, to be disposed of and settled in Places and Families, where they are likely to be instructed in those Principles and first Rudiments of their After-Lives; which their own Judgments or Inclinations are swayed by. But as they err from that wise Counsel, and this prudent Care, who are oft needlessly in the Tavern and Alehouse, they neither have reason to expect that their Children, Servants, or Apprentices should much regard what they say, or even threaten; (more than for Eye-Service,) nor even that God should hear their Prayers for their Families, who themselves act so much below their Reason, and trifle in the Judgment of all Men.

What can such expect then, but that their Families (particularly the Youth in them) will follow their Examples, and protect themselves under their Patronage! And if you who are Parents and Masters of Families, will have your free Conversation, they will not fail to

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have their Jestings; which is foolish, or not convenient, and perhaps corrupt Communication. If you will take your Glasse freely, tho' not to what you call scandalous Sottishness, they will be in hazard of drinking to vile Excess, and call it only good Fellowship; while they have such Indulgence of your Example: And though you could justly say in your own Vindication, that you had usually the Company and Conversation of sober Persons there, yet others may, by your Example, be betrayed into bad Company, (with which such Places usually abound) and meet with the Instruments of their Ruin there. O think seriously of this, and let it be a Restraint upon you, as you would not be Partakers in, and even Patrons of other Men's Sins.

And further, if these Interviews were lawful in themselves, and innocent, yet if they cast a Stumbling-block in the Way of the Weak, and so are the Occasions of Sin unto others, you should certainly forbear them.

Conscience, which God has placed in every Man, carries such visible Marks of his Witness and Vicegerency there, that it is above any Man's Censure, and accountable to him only: So that in Matters of strict and absolute Duty, there seems to be no Argument for Men to controul and act contrary to it, and so condemn themselves, lest others should take Offence, or make any ill Use of their Example; yet in Matters of Indifference, and where the

Obligation is not so strong. Self-denial should take Place; and there should be a charitable Concern and Respect had to others: For the Rule is always wholesome and obligatory. Take heed, lest by any means this Liberty of yours become a Stumbling-block to them that are weak. For as St. Paul argues with the believing Corinthians, against the least Encouragement to Idolatry, by their outward Practice, though it were sinless in it self, and why they should not sit at Meat in an Idol Temple, lest the Conscience of him that is weak, be emboldened to eat those Things which are offered to Idols. So may we argue here, "If any see you who have Knowledge, frequently sit at Meat, and take your Glass in the Tavern or Alehouse, shall not the Conscience of these that are weak, be emboldened to take the like Liberty, and being too weak to encounter the Temptation, fall into Sin? But when ye so sin against the Brethren and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ". Wherefore, says that affectionate Apostle, *If Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Flesh while the World standeth, lest I make my Brother to offend.* Here was Brotherly Love, and Christian Sympathy, worthy of all our Imitation.

Doubtless, there are many Things lawful, that are no ways expedient either in the Eye

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of common Prudence, or Christian Sympathy and Compassion: And if St. Paul would never eat Flesh, rather than offend a weak Brother, we should never drink Wine, or any spirituous and enflaming Liquor; nor so much as sit in a *Tavern* or *Publick-house*, rather than to offend or stumble any of those for whom Christ died. The Abuse of our Christian Liberty this way, is a Sin against the *Lord Christ, their Lord and ours*. So we should gratify our worst Enemies, expose our selves to the heavy Resentment of Heaven, and Frowns of our best Friends: And there is a Woe denounced on the Man by whom Offences come. With how much Caution every one should endeavour to escape that Woe, our Saviour has also told us, when he says, *If thy right Eye, or thy right Hand offend thee, i. e. cause thee to offend, cut it off, or pluck it out, and cast it from thee.*^a It is dangerous to stand in the way of Sinners, or partake with them in their Sins, much more to patronize and pave a Way for their sinful Courses. And as it is incomparably better in it self, more prudent and safe, it would be answerably of more Service and Comfort to every one, to study by their own Example industriously to draw others on in the Ways of Religion, than by their heedless and unguarded Steps to betray them into the Ways of Destruction. Consider it well, for

^a Matt. v. 29, 30.

the sake of others in general, and shew yourselves Men; Men of generous Sympathy, and social Affections.



CHAP. III.

*Of the faithful Ministers of Christ, and
godly Men in particular.*

IN Evidence of his unsearchable Wisdom, and Vindication of his absolute Sovereignty, as well for the eternal Honour of his own Free Grace, and the Good of Men, whom he dignified particularly in their first Creation with his own Likeness, God has both revealed his Mind to them in all Ages, erected and appointed a standing Ministry, and in the most undoubted Oracles, assured us he will have it continued in his Church till the End of the World. And as the Office is thus particularly taken care of, and provided for, it is very honourable; so the Trust of those who are orderly called to, and invested with it, is very great. *They are Ambassadors for Christ;*^a and as thus employed for the *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* They have the most weighty Concerns on their Hands, and Busi-

^a 2 Cor. v. 18.

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ness of the last Importance to negotiate : An Embassy to deliver in his Name, and on his Account; and besides, many other great Things contained therein, they have a Treaty of Peace and Marriage to manage between Heaven's Monarch and sinful Men. Hence they are with an Emphasis, *The Ministers of God for good unto Men* ^b: And as able Ministets of the New Testament, the happy Instruments of Mens Conversion, Faith, and Salvation. Thus they watch over their Souls for good, as they that must give an Account, and that would give it in with Joy; and in their so doing, *they approve themselves the Ministers of God*. Now they that thus faithfully discharge this great Trust, committed to them, are worthy of great Deference and Respect : As said St. Paul, *Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God* ^c. Their Character and Office being particularly dignified, so should also their Respect be : *Let the Elders that rule well among you, be counted worthy of double Honour* ^d. But those who needlessly frequent *Taverns and Publick-houses*, are so far from observing this Advice, or giving any due Honour and Respect to such their Ministers, that they are both a Grief and Shame to them, and to their godly Friends and Neighbours in general and particular.

^b Rom. xiii. 4. ² Cor. vi. 4. ^c 1 Cor. iv. 1. ^d 1 Tim. v. 17.

S E C T. I.

Of the Grief of faithful Ministers, and godly Men in general.

AS the great Design and End of a Gospel-Ministry is to persuade and draw Persons from those Follies and Excesses that are recommended by the Advice, and urged by the Example of Multitudes, and which the various Tempers of every ones corrupt Nature inclines them to, and to instil into them the better Principles of Wisdom, Chastity, and Temperance, to make them sober, religious, vigilant, and watchful : It must needs be very grievous to faithful Ministers, (I say nothing of others) when the Ends of their Ministry, their Labours of Love, and Labours in the Lord, are not answered, but subverted ; and for all their pious and earnest Endeavours to recommend the Gospel to Mens Consciences, and thereby to guide Men out of Darknes into Light, and from under the Power of Sin unto God ; yet they seem to love Darknes more than Light, and prefer their own Corruptions to its most wholesome Instructions. And as the Disrespect of Persons to a sound and faithful Ministry, is a Scripture-Evidence that their Works are evil, and what hath incurred heavy and desolating Judgments on Places and People, *Tavern* and *Alehouse* haunting have

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no little Tendence and Influence to beget or further this Disrespect; and so has justly *caused the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, to mourn*^e. It has called them to fast, to chastize and humble themselves, as in the Dust, to weep, wrestle, and cry between the Porch and the Altar, *Spare thy People, O Lord*. As you would not then grieve those that watch for your good, that bring you glad Tidings of good Things, publish the Way of Salvation, and are your spiritual Fathers in Christ, forbear this Practice; for as the wise Man says, *A foolish Son is a Grief to his Father, and a Bitterness to her that bare him*^f. And every foolish Action of the Child, increases the Father's Grief, and tends to bring down his grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave: So every time you repeat this Practice, you wound the Hearts of your faithful Ministers, and add to them new Grief, as well as to your other godly Friends and Neighbours; whom though you now despise, and ridicule all their Concern for you, if you persist in these your Courses, they will be swift Witnesses against you at the Bar of Christ, *when he shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*^g.

^e Joel i. 9. Chap. ii. 17. Ezra ix. 5. ^f Prov. xvii. 25.
^g 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

§ E C T. II.

Of the Shame of faithful Ministers, and godly Men in general.

THough Shame is a Passion naturally produced by the Guilt or Conscience of any Evil or Folly in our selves (especially) or done by us, yet it sometimes proceeds from, and is usually heightened by the Contempts and Slights we meet with from others, or the Disappointment of our Hopes, Endeavours, and Desires: And that those who have the Happiness to attend a sound and faithful Ministry, and continue needlessly to frequent *Taverns* and *Alehouses*, are guilty of all these Aggravations of their Ministers Shame and Reproach, will appear, as they indulge a Practice that is contrary to their Advice, Prayers, and Examples.

I. The Advice, Doctrine, and Sermons of true and faithful Ministers of the Gospel, are to persuade Men to what is contrary in its Tendency and Actions to any such Practice, as is here spoken of: For all these are to make evil Men good, and good Men better; to enlighten the Understanding, direct the Judgment, and persuade the Will so to bring Men from Error to Truth; *from Darknes to Light, and from the Power of Sin unto Godⁿ.* To

ⁿ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

show them the true Way of Salvation, and to guide their Feet into the Way of Peace¹; that they may walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the Time^k. How must they blush then, and be covered with Shame for their Hearers, whose Practice, such as I speak of, almost daily confronts their Doctrine, stems their Endeavours, and makes the most wholesome Counsel which they give, of none Effect! Thus Ezra was ashamed, and blushed to lift up his Face to God¹: And Daniel set his Face unto the Lord God, to seek, by Prayer and Supplications, with Fasting, and Sack-cloth, and Ashes, and Confusion of Face, &c. So much is allowed of by St. Paul, when he saith of the Corinthians Obedience to his Doctrine, and his boasting of them on that Account, *If I have boasted any thing of you, I am not ashamed^m*. O that there were such Care in every one, that their faithful Admonishers might have Reason to boast in them! That the Advice they give, the Sermons they preach, and the Doctrines according to Godliness, which they endeavour to illustrate and establish thereby, might have the wished for End; and they their wished for Encouragement herein and hereby, and in no wise be ashamed!

2. The Prayers of faithful Ministers, are what contradict and decry such a Practice.

¹ Luke i. 19. ^k Eph. v. 15, 16. ¹ Ezra ix. 6. Dan. ix. 3--6.
^m 2 Cor. vii. 9.

Prayer is not only a natural Duty, or what Nature it self directs to and pleads for the Performance of, as what is both necessary for, and a just Debt of the Creature to its Creator, Preserver, and gracious Benefactor: But 'tis so natural to a Gospel Temper and Spirit, it has been, not unaptly, called by some, *The Breath of the new Creature*; and it seems to be so natural and essential to it; that the Christian can no more live without Prayer, than the Man without Breath. And as it is an essential Mark of Conversion, so it is the first Character the Lord gives us to discern a converted Person by, *Behold he prayeth*ⁿ. As the calling then of those whom Grace has qualified for the Work of the Ministry; so their Office therein makes Prayer their common Practice, as well as their cogent Duty. You little know, my Friends, what Watchings and Wrestlings your Ministers have, how they strive in Season and out of Season for you in their Prayers. This is a Sacrifice they oft present at the Throne of Grace on your Account; they are always mindful of you in their Prayers. And what do you think they pray for on your Behalf? Is it for your Liberty to sin, and your Indulgence either in such Principles or Practices as please the Flesh, and gratify the sensual Part? No; but they watch diligently for your good, as those that would give in

ⁿ Acts ix. 11.

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their Accounts with Joy, and have their Prayers unto God for you, *That you might be saved*^o; as St. Paul, for his Countrymen the *Jews*: And to this End, *That you may be sanctified wholly, that your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*^o. *That you may stand perfect and compleat in all the Will of God*^o. *That they may espouse you to one Husband, and present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ*^o. If it cannot then be made to appear, (as I believe it never can) that this haunting of Taverns and Alehouses is comely for them that are sanctified; and according to the Will of God, they that practise it, are the Shame and Reproach of their faithful Ministers, and of their fervent Labours in their Prayers for them, who should rather strive to be, and shew they are *their Crown of rejoicing, their Glory and Joy*^t, and not indulge a Practice both contrary to, insulting of, and reflecting on them and on their fervent Prayers.

3. This Practice is contrary to the Example of faithful Ministers. Example, we all know, adds most Weight to the Doctrines, Principles, or Arguments advanced by any Person, and gives them the most powerful Influence on others: And, however, in our more fashionable than serious Days, some Persons of the first Rank, even in the Church, are

^o Rom. x. 1. ^p 1 Theff. v. 2, 3. ^q Col. iv. 11. ^r 2 Cor. xi. 2. ^s 1 Theff. ii. 19, 20.

guilty of this Practice, (as it is not fit for others Imitation) it is both very unseemly in them, what shamefully reflects on their Character and Office, and what the godly Ministers in primitive and purer Days seem to have been Strangers to: For their Conversation then was a plain Evidence, as they were to be Followers of Christ, according to their Place and Office in the Church, they were to be *Examples to the Flock*: And they followed their Royal Pattern so close, they could invite others to walk in their Steps. *Brethren*, said St. Paul, *be Followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as you have us for an Example*¹. And as the Example of those Worthies was used to enforce their Doctrine, and add Strength to their other Arguments with Men, for their spiritual and best good. The Word is ever binding on such; *to be Examples of the Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity*². They that argue thus, argue the most rationally and conclusively; and the more conclusive any Argument is in it self, the more like it is to be convincing; and consequently they who slight it, do the more Reproach and Dishonour to him who advances it. But as Advice, Prayers, and Example, when they are all united, are both the most undeniable and strenuous Arguments any Persons can use to persuade

¹ 1 Pet. v. 1.² Phil. iii. 17.³ 1 Tim. iv. 12.

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others to a Compliance with what they argue for: And these are all used by faithful Ministers, to dissuade People from the Practice of frequenting *Taverns* and *Alehouses*, and other Places of publick Resort, to drink spirituous and enflaming Liquors: Those who contemn or stop their Ears in all such Reasons, harden their Necks, and continue in Disobedience against such united Arguments, pour the last Calumny and Shame they can on such their Admonishers; and are in hazard to fall under the Weight of that awful Word, *He that being oft reprov'd, hardens his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy*.

And however disrespectfully some may think, and others at these Interviews speak of Ministers as too scrupulous and precise, this Practice is the Burden of many other thinking and serious Persons, as well as of them. How harmless then, or innocent forever some of you may think the Practice is in you, either because of your Company or Conduct there, as there is not that Knowledge in every Man, you should leave it for their sakes; for if *thy Brother be grieved with thy Liberty, now walkest thou not charitably*. Hence is that just Observation.

“It is to be considered, that in the judging
“of the Lawfulness of a Diversion, I ought

^y Prov. xxix. 1.

^z Rom. xiv. 15.

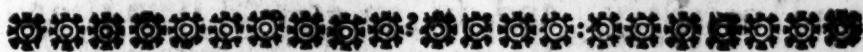
“ not to be concluded by my single Opinion,
 “ contrary to the Sense of other pious and
 “ good People. Though my Judgment is not
 “ to be determined by theirs, but by the Evi-
 “ dence of the thing, yet I humbly conceive
 “ it is fit their Judgment should have some In-
 “ fluence on my Practice. Charity obliges me
 “ to shew so much Regard to a Fellow-Chri-
 “ stian, as not to grieve him by doing any
 “ Action he thinks displeasing to God, and
 “ which might as well be omitted”. And
 then he goes on; “ I would propose to your
 “ further Thoughts, whether it be not a Du-
 “ ty to stand more upon your Reputation,
 “ than to part with any Portion of it for the
 “ sake of a Diversion; and whether we ought
 “ not to value more the Esteem of good Chri-
 “ stians, than to forfeit it rather than forego
 “ the Use of our lawful Liberty in a Matter
 “ of Recreation only? — With all this, re-
 “ member *Paul’s* Exhortation, ^a where, a-
 “ mong other Marks and Characters of those
 “ Things that he recommends to our Pra-
 “ ctice, this is one, *That they be of good Report.*
 “ Though I defer not so much to Opinion
 “ and Custom, as to think they can alter the
 “ intrinsick Nature of Actions, so that Virtue
 “ shall become Vice, or Vice Virtue; yet I
 “ can’t forbear being of the Mind, that an
 “ Action in it self indifferent, may become by

^a Phil. iv. 8.

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“ Accident sinful, when stamped with an ill
“ Name, by general Suffrage, or by a Num-
“ ber of conscientious Christians.

Consider this now and carry it home ; let it have an abiding Force upon you : And if you can't be persuaded for your own sakes, yet for the sake of others who are serious, and wish you well, and are troubled at such a Practice, forbear it ; and endeavour to *please your Neighbours for their good to Edification*^b. Shew that you have Christian Charity and Compassion ; that you would not do any thing *whereby your Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak*^c. Shew that you love those whom you believe God loves ; and that you can in Life freely deny your selves what you could otherwise allow of, purely for the sake of those for whom Christ died.



CHAP. IV.

Of God and the Christian Religion.

IT being impossible that finite should ever comprehend infinite, the most elevated Thoughts and enlarged Conceptions of the purest and most refined Creatures, even of

^b Rom. xv. 2.

^c Rom. xiv. 21.

those who are freed from, or raised above all the Dregs of Sense, must needs fall infinitely short of the Glory of God, of whom we ought always to think and speak with the profoundest Reverence and holiest Awe. Though Reason in the Philosopher can better tell *that God is; than what he is;* and our Natures are not capable to form an adequate Notion of his incomprehensible Majesty; that we may nevertheless conceive and speak suitably of him; he has graciously condescended to assist our clouded and bleared Reason with his perfect and clear Revelation; and whatsoever Perfections are ascribed to him in this glorious Prospective, serve either to heighten our Reverence, or encourage and encrease our Devotion. The most scriptural and received Notion of God is, *that he is an absolute Monarch;* a pure, spiritual, self-existing, independent, and necessary, and so an eternal Being, and the Source of Being to all Things besides: That he gave to the Worlds; and the several Ranks of Creatures in them, their Being at first, by the Word of his Power; Heaven with all its Hosts, and the Earth with all its Inhabitants, may say, *He made us; and not we our selves^a. The Sea is his; and he made it; and his Hands formed the dry Land^c.* The Elders and Rulers of Israel have solemnly acknowledged to him, *Thou, even thou art Lord*

^a Psal. c. 3. ^c Psal. xciv. 5.

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alone, thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host; the Earth, and all Things that are therein, the Seas and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and the Host of Heaven worshippeth thee^f. And with how much Ease he did this great Work, and raised and furnished these immense Structures, we learn, where it is told us, He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast^g. This great Maker supports also by his Providence, the Creatures which he has made; and as this is done by the same Power that caused them first to exist, he suitably supplies them all on his own free Bounty and Expence. It is hence the most evident, that God has a despotick Rule over, and is worthy of the constant and best Service of all his Creatures, (and justly expects it from them in their several Places and Capacities): But as he has endowed Man with admirable Faculties, implanted in and enriched his Nature with more excellent Powers than any other Creature on his Orb, and thereby made him capable to serve his Maker in a higher and better manner than these, he does not only look for better Service from him, but that all his Diligence and Industry in exercise of his nobler Powers, to answer the great Ends of his Creation and superior Endowments, may not be in vain, and he left therein to beat

^f Neh. ix. 6.

^g Psal. xxxiii. 9.

the Air : His great Creator has neither left himself without Witnels in any Man, or as if he had made all Mankind in vain, wholly and unconcernedly left them in their rebellious and fallen State, to the uncertain Dictates of a deceived Understanding, bewildred Judgment, depraved Will, corrupt Affections, &c. and to spell all their Religion from the glimmering Light of debased Nature ; But (as a most kind Benefactor) has graciously condescended to give a most certain, sufficient, and unerring Rule, to regulate and measure both their Principles and their Practices, their Faith, and all their Actions by, and a Commission to preach it to all Nations. This is the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament ; *The Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*^h : The Balance of the Sanctuary ; the only certain Standard of Truth, and Touchstone of Error among Men. *The Law and the Testimony, whatsoever speaks not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in it*ⁱ.

These Writings, as they have God for their Author and Director, (for *all Scripture is given by the Inspiration of God*^k) ; they have his Spirit for their Guide, and his Glory for their End ; and holy Men of God, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, were their Penmen, so they are justly stiled by his Word.

^h Eph. ii. 20.ⁱ Isa. viii. 20.^k 2 Tim. iii. 16.

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And as the holy Scriptures instruct us in the saving Knowledge, and acceptable Worship of God, according to the Rules of his own Appointment, and what we therefore call Religion. The Old and New Testament, and so the Apostles and Prophets, jointly shewing Jesus Christ the Lord to be the Substance of their Doctrine; *the Foundation and chief Corner-stone of the Church*¹; *the only Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved*^m; and whereby alone we can enjoy all that Bliss they speak of and propose, are therefore said to instruct us in the Christian Religion. Whatsoever then does not correspond with or is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, should therefore be the Abhorrence of Mankind, and rejected of them with disdain, as being contrary to the Christian Religion, and the plainest and most full Discovery that ever was, or ever shall be given to the World, of God's Will and Men's Duty.

God and the Christian Religion being also concerned in or affected by the Actions of Men in general, and more by those that are common in their Practice, and powerful in their Influence; such as what is here spoken of, as by what is said it does in measure appear; it will be more evident, undeniable, and convincing to every serious and unprejudic'd Person, that it is a Practice both con-

¹ Eph. ii. 20.

^m Acts iv. 12.

rary and offensive to God, and affronting to the Christian Religion.

S E C T. I.

Of God.

HOWEVER the different Tempers and Inclinations, or the divers Interests and Educations of Men have led them into different Notions about Bliss and Happiness, all true Blessedness or Happiness being essentially in God, the ultimate and supreme Happiness of the reasonable Creature must necessarily and principally consist in its Conformity to, and Enjoyment of him; according to that divine Sentence, *This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God*ⁿ. It was so with the first Man in his Creation; has been found and accounted so in the several Ages of the present World, and will be so even in the World to come. The Beginning of the Book of God says, *God made Man in his own Image*^o; pourtrayed his own Likeness signally on him in divers Respects, conversed familiarly with, and in a most friendly manner instructed him in his native, pure, and sinless State. And as the Power of Grace was felt by, and operated in the Elect, in the Infancy of Time, it erased and destroyed the foul Characters of

ⁿ John xvii. 3.

^o Gen. i. 27, 28, 29.

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Sin, and the Works of the evil one, and moulded them into somewhat of Likeness to the Lord, and recovered them from the Ruins of Sin; proportionably unto which, they were admitted into Fellowship and Freedom with God. Thus it is said of devout *Enoch*, *He walked with God*^p. Thus righteous *Noah* found *Favour with God*^q; and God freely conversed with him, and warned him to prepare an Ark, to save himself and his Family from the Flood that should sweep away the rest of the World drenched in Sin. This continued after the Flood: And so *Abraham* being called by that Grace, which renewed his Heart, influenc'd his whole Conduct, and made him careful to command his Children and his Household after him, that they should keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment, that the Lord might bring upon *Abraham* that which he had spoken of him^r. Thus he acquired the lasting Encomium of *the Friend of God*^s, and had the Freedom as such; witness the many Conferences recorded between God and him. And *Jacob* declared that he saw God Face to Face^t. But who like *Moses*, *The Skin of whose Face shone so bright*, with the Reflexion of the heavenly Glory, when he had talked with the Lord, that *Aaron and the Children of Israel* were afraid to come nigh him: And till *Moses* had done speaking with them, he put

^p Gen. v. 22. ^q Chap. vi. 8. ^r Chap. xviii. 19. ^s Jam. ii. 23. ^t Chap. xxxii. 2. ^u Exod. xxxiv. 30, 33.

a Veil on his Face : And the Lord spake unto Moses Face to Face, as a Man speaketh unto his Friend. And it is related of David, who by Grace was made *a Man after God's own Heart*^x, that he *beheld his Face in Righteousness*. Thus it was with the Old Testament Worthies in general.

Grace, which is always the same in its Nature and Operation, has the same Efficacy in the Gospel-day; and as they who are implanted by it into Christ Jesus, are new Creatures, they who have truly and in a new Covenant-way, *tasted that God is gracious, and come unto Christ as a living Stone*^y; and by Faith of the divine Operation, *Behold with open Face in the Gospel-glass, the Glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*^z: *As they have born the Image of the Earthy, now bear the Image of the Heavenly Adam*^a.

Thus Gospel-Saints, those who are led by the Spirit of the Lord, and effectually called by Grace in the Gospel-day, are said to be such, *who have learned Christ; who have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the Truth is in Jesus; that have put off concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and are renewed in the Spirit of their Mind; and*

^x Acts xiii. 22. ^y 1 Pet. ii. 3, 4. ^z 2 Cor. iii. 18. ^a 1 Cor. xv. 40.

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put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness^b.

The consummate Bliss of the Godly in the coming World, will also consist very much in this, according to the most undoubted Authority; *They shall see Face to Face, and know even as they are known^c.* So the Divine says, *They shall see his Face, and his Name shall be in their Foreheads^d.* And that beatifick Vision will have such a transforming Power on them, that their present Triumph commences now in Faith; and on its Prospect is thus expressed by the beloved Disciple: *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is^e.*

Now the Happiness and Glory of Christians being, in a great measure, concealed in the present World, and from the Men of it, it must be chiefly spiritual and inward, and what the Powers of the natural, unconverted, unsanctified Man can't discern; yet Grace, which is both the Earnest and Beginning of Glory, having a living and active Power in it, needs must, and can't choose but shew it self and its Ascendance in the Man who has it, by his Life, a Christian Life, a Life agreeable and pleasing to God; and though it is seated, or centers in the Heart, it will take its Circum-

^b Eph. iv. 20—24.

^c 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

^d Rev. xxii. 4.

^e 1 John iii. 2.

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ference, and diffuse its Virtue through the whole Conversation. But a needless frequenting of *Taverns* and *Publick-houses* seems both contrary and offensive to God.

1. *It is contrary to God.* The Perfections of God's Nature, Works, Will, and Word, are so infinite to infer a Censure on whosoever (among reasonable Creatures) does not copy thereby, or whatsoever does not answer thereto; and as his Word gives us the best and most perfect Discovery of all this, those Persons or Practices can't be exempted from its Rebuke, which have none of its Command to warrant them, nor of its approved Example to support them; and I am persuaded the Practice I speak of hath neither of these.

(1.) It has no scripture Command or divine Authority there to warrant it. It is usual in the sacred Records, to justify, authorize, and warrant the things there spoken, with *Thus saith the Lord; And the Lord spake: And God commanded, saying;* or some such like Terms. Thus it was common with the Seers, the Prophets, and all the holy inspired Penmen of the holy Bible, by whom God in the several Ages of the World did formerly commit his Will to Writing, for the Doctrine, Instruction, and Benefit of them in After-days, to repeat their Commission, and refer to their Charter.

But the holy Scripture is so far from warranting and encouraging, or giving the least Countenance

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Countenance to this Practice, that it is oft found in the strongest Terms to decry and forbid it; and even to fence against it with the most severe Threats and awful Denunciations of Evil, on all who dare confront its Power, or dispute its Authority, and make light of its Cautions and Prohibitions.

2. It has no approved Example in the holy Scripture to support it. You have heard of the Influence of Example already, and I know it is not uncommon with some to shelter and justify themselves in their beloved, though unwarranted Practices, and even to be fond of them, and plead for them; because some Persons, whom the Scripture allows to be Men of Religion, and even commends for their eminent Grace, and Lustre in the Church, have, for all this, been found in such Ways: So they excuse themselves in Adultery and Blood-shed from the Example of *Solomon*, or *David* in the matter of *Uriah*; or in a false equivocating way of Speech, from the Example of *Peter*; or in Excess of Liquor, from *Noah*, &c. But alas! they never remember that these Actions of those Men of Religion were sad Instances of their Weaknesses and their Faults: What caused their after Horror, and deep Concern, lay with an insupportable Weight on their Minds, occasioned their heavy Out-cries, and inferred many sad Consequences on them afterwards: For *when they forsook his Law, and walked not in his*

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Judg-

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Judgments; when they brake his Statutes, and kept not his Commandments, then the Lord visited their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes^f. Hence as Solomon's latter Days were employed in his writing the Book of Ecclesiastes, and therein handing down to latest Posterity a Recantation of his Error, in his too adventurous Attempts, to prove his Heart with Mirth, and to enjoy Pleasures; when on an exquisite Search, he gives to all carnal Enjoyments their just Motto from their unalterable Nature, *Vanity of Vanities, and vexation of Spirit*. Every one who reads and observes the History of David, in his after Writings, will find that the Arrows of the Lord struck fast in him, and his Hand pressed him sore. That his Iniquities went over his Head as an heavy Burden; they were too heavy for him. He was troubled, and bowed down greatly, and went mourning all the Day: And his Sorrow was continually before him^g. For this he was oft caused to pray with Tears, *Deliver me, O Lord, from Blood-guiltiness, and keep back thy Servant from presumptuous Sins*^h. This deprived him of the Honour, and for this the Desire of his Heart could not be granted him, to build God an House; neither could the Sword ever depart from his own House, because he was a Man of Bloodⁱ. Thus Peter's Reflexion, on his Denial of his Lord, made

^f Psal. lxxxix. 30, 31, 32.
2, 3, 4, 6, 17.

^g Psal. li. 4.

^h Eccles. ii. 1.

ⁱ Psal. xxxviii.

^k 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

him

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him to go out and weep bitterly; and when ever he thought thereon he wept. And how shamefully was Noah divested of all his Modesty, when heated with Lust, and hurried into the most detestable and unnatural Sin of Incest in his drunken fit, and what caused his after Curse of his own Son. All which must certainly be a Satyr on his own Excess, and reprove it smartly. And none of the Scripture Worthies have that Character raised from any such Practice; but what is recorded of them of that kind, is a Stain on their Memory, as well as for others Warning and Caution.

Such is the Practice here spoke of: It has not one approved Instance or Example in all the holy Scriptures. And so far is Nature's improved Light from justifying it in its natural and usual Consequences and Effects, which are Debauchery and Excess, that the more polite among the Heathens have ever decryed, inveighed, and fenced against them; as what would effeminate and debase the bravest Spirits, and tarnish the Glory of a most flourishing or learned Nation and People; and leave them as reprobate Silver, or the despised Dregs of the Earth, and Shame of Mankind.

The Hatefulness, as well as Meanness and Danger of the Excess of Liquor, (and Men

¹ Matt. xxvi. 75.

are the most exposed thereto in *Taverns* and *Alehouses*) is what so unmans Persons, and strips them of their distinguishing Excellence of Reason; that *Seneca* says^m, it has occasioned some to give order to their Servants beforehand, to take them away by Force, for fear of Mischief, and not to obey their Master's themselves when they are hot-headed.

It seems to have been a Custom with the *Spartans* to make their Slaves drunk, that their Children observing the Folly and Impertinence they were guilty of at such times, they might conceive a Disdain to it, and carefully avoid the Practice themselves. And one would think it sufficient for any wise Man, when he sees the Beastliness of a Person in Excess of Liquor, to create in him an utter Odium of it.

If the famous History of *Telemachus* is to have any Credit, ⁿ the *Cyprians* having abandoned themselves to these extravagant Follies, acted in their whole Behaviour, with least Discretion, and utmost Danger; and enflamed with the Furies of *Bacchus*, sung such Verses in honour of *Venus* and *Cupid*, as ought to strike a Horror into all that love Virtue: Neither had they sufficient Presence of Mind, either to give necessary Orders, or to work for their own safety; but as raving Bacchinals, utterly incapable of knowing the Danger they

^m *Senec. Morals, cap. 9.* ⁿ *Telemach. Advent. Vol. I. Book 4.*

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were in, ran where all the Horrors of Death stared them in the Face. Such was their sordid Conduct, it caused wise *Mentor* to cry with terrible Voice to *Telemachus* (as one he wished well); "Fly, fly without Delay: The Soil produces nothing but Poison; the Air you breathe is infected with the Plague; the Men are contagious, and converse with each other only to spread the fatal Venom. Base and infamous Voluptuousness! The worst of all those Evils that issued out of *Pandora's* Box, dissolves them in Luxury, and suffers no Virtue in this Place. Fly, stay not a Moment; look not once behind you; and as you run, shake off the very Remembrance of this execrable Island.

Under the Infatuation of Liquor, the unhappy *Trojans* forwarded, with their own Hands, their City's Destruction, which the ten Years War of the *Grecians* could never effect. By means of this, ° *Cyrus* (when all his other Attempts were unsuccessful) had an Opportunity to enter his Forces into, and destroy *Babylon*, the Glory of the *Chaldees*, and one of the strongest and best fortify'd Cities in the World. Its proverbial Name is *the Scythian's Reproach*; and a lasting Stain on their Memory. Its Prevalence over the *Greeks* caused the Departure of the Beauty of that brave People, and the Decay of all

their Learning and Renown. Its Common-
ness among the *Persians*, dissuaded *Philip the*
Great of Macedon from warring with them,
(as a People in whose Conquest he would have
little Honour); for, said he, *They will soon*
ruin themselves alone. This did not only de-
stroy many of his dear Friends and Confi-
dents, Men of Valour and Bravery in the
Field, the Worthies of their Day, whom dan-
gerous Enterprizes were only a Diversion to,
and would not turn back for, or give way to
any: But *Alexander* himself, who had been
the Terror of the World, and Conqueror
over many wealthy Nations and Empires,
fell at last a Victim hereto. Therefore to
restore and secure the decayed Glory of *Salen-*
tum, *Mentor* wisely advises *Idomeneus* its King:
“ ’Tis my Opinion, you ought never to suf-
“ fer Wine to grow too common in your Do-
“ minions; and if too many Vines have been
“ planted, you must command them forthwith
“ to be plucked up. Wine is the Source of
“ the greatest Mischiefs among the People; it
“ occasions Distempers, Quarrels, Seditions,
“ Idleness, Aversion to Labour, Disorders in
“ Families: Let Wine therefore be preserved,
“ as it were, for a Cordial, or a choice Li-
“ quor, to be employed only in Sacrifices, or
“ extraordinary Festivals.

^p *Prideaux's Hist.* Part I. Book 8.
Book 12.

^q *Telemach.* Vol. I.

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There are many Witnesses besides these, as well in profane, as in sacred History, whose Testimony decries Excess of Liquor, and tends to suppress every Practice which countenances or forwards it.

2. *It is offensive to God.* The best Rule, and most infallible Medium, that I know, by which to judge of a Person's Approbation, or Disgust and Dislike of any Thing, is its Agreeableness with, or its Contrariety to his declared Will and Mind: And if this be allowed the best way for us to judge in this Case, the Practice of Tippling, or needless frequenting of *Taverns and Alehouses*, &c. must be highly offensive to God; as it does not only not correspond with, or is not commended or justified by, but also the most disagreeable and contrary to the holy Scriptures, the only certain Declaration that Men have of his Mind and Will, concerning either their Faith and Principles, or their Life and Practices. And as the Gospel, or the New Testament, which is the last and the most full Declaration of the same, shews greater Detestation and Abhorrence of this Practice, so we are led to

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Of the Christian Religion.

BY the Christian Religion being meant, the saving Knowledge and Acquaintance with, and acceptable Worship of God, according to the Instructions of the New Testament; that is, with Soul-appropriating, Heart-purifying, Life-reforming, and Scripture-confirming Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as God-man, the *only Mediator*^r; and so as *the Lord our Righteousness*^r. Whatsoever corresponds not with, or is contrary or offensive hereto, is, by no means, to be pleaded for, or even allowed of, and in those who have the Name of Christ named on them, and are called Christians, who, with that Name, are commanded to *depart from all Iniquity*^r. But this Practice,

1. Does not correspond with, but is contrary to the Christian Religion. Whatsoever assumes to it self the Name, is cloathed with the Title, or passes for Religion with Men: That which is truly and strictly so, and worthy of the Character, is sacred in it self, and of a divine Extract; and as the Christian Religion is the most perfect and refined, and what shall have no after Addition, Edition, or Cor-

^r 1 Tim. ii. 5.^r Jer. xxiii. 6.^r 2 Tim. ii. 19.

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rection; while the World and present State of Things endure: It must necessarily be (as it is undeniably manifest in the holy Scriptures) clothed with these Properties, which are disagreeable to, if not also inconsistent with the Practice I speak of; and so this Religion is pure and undefiled, peaceable and loving, heavenly and spiritual; safe, beneficial, and comfortable, both in its Nature, Operation, and way of working, and in all its Effects, which are the most directly opposite to haunting of Taverns and Ale-houses, where nothing is more common than vile Company, impure or impertinent Discourse, and lascivious and filthy Practices; needless Disputes and Differences, Sensuality, dangerous and unprofitable, as well as unseemly Conduct, and such, in the whole, as leaves Occasion of After-Sorrow and Concern.

And, however, the Doctrine of the Gospel is a Doctrine of most rich and free Grace, though it does inform us that the Grace of God, in the way of a new Covenant, through the Lord Jesus Christ the Mediator, must have all the Honour to have laid the Foundation, carry on the Work, and, at last, to finish the immense Design of our Happiness. Though this Doctrine saith, that we are chosen in Grace, effectually called, converted, and adopted by Grace, and that nothing but Grace can justify and save those that are Sinners, and otherwise ungodly: And this Grace shines

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with

with full Lustre in God, by his sovereign and free Imputation to us of the perfect Righteousness of Christ without us for our Justification; and by His working Faith in us, whereby we are enabled to accept of, appropriate, and apply the same to our selves, to renounce all other Righteousness, either within or without us, and to rest on the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Thus he is made to be Sin for us, who himself knew no Sin; that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him. Thus Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. Thus when the Law concludes all under its Curse, who continue not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them; and when it is out of the Power of the Law to justify any who have ever broken it; as it knows nothing of Repentance, how to shew Mercy, or even to compassionate the Offender, then the Grace of the Gospel takes Place, and does it; For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, God sending his own Son in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, and for Sin condemned Sin in the Flesh, that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. Though it is through Christ, who was slain, taken down from the Tree, and laid in a Sepulchre; whom God raised from the dead,

2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 3, 4

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that the Gospel preaches forgiveness of Sins; and that by him all that believe are justified from all Things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses; and that there is no Salvation in any other; neither is there any other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved^a. And that to him that worketh is the Reward, not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness^b; and so it informs us of their Mistake and deluded Expectation, that build the Hopes of their Justification and Salvation on any Righteousness inherent in, or done by them; for it often tells us, in the most express Terms, By the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in his sight; and that we are justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ^c; and so gives us the different Pursuits and Success of the self-righteous Jews, and the Christ-applying and Christ-dependending Gentiles, when it says, The Gentiles which followed not after Righteousness, have attained to Righteousness, even the Righteousness which is, in righteousness, of Faith. But Israel, which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not of Faith^d. — How-

^a Acts xiii. 29, 30, 38, 39.
4, 5.

^c Chap. iii. 20.

^a Acts iv. 12.

^b Rom. iv.
^d Chap. ix. 30, 31, 32.

ever, I say, this seems to be the plain Doctrine of the Gospel, and inviolably preserves the Crown on the Head of Christ and free Grace; yet it is so far from a Doctrine of Licentiousness, or allowing any Person to sin, because Grace abounds, or to do Evil, that Good may come, (as some have wickedly charged it), that it equally teaches Justification and Sanctification, and their Inseparableness in the Elect and Called in Christ; and that God neither justifies any whom he does not also sanctify, nor forgives any ones Sins whom he does not also cleanse from all Unrighteousness; and that the very Tenor of the Doctrine is to excite all Care in the Children of God that they sin not. And as he makes none happy whom he does not first make holy, (and, indeed, none is fit for Happiness but who is so) it is equally in the Nature of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Power of its Grace, *to teach us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World.* And so it is a Doctrine which both instructs us in, and enforces our Observance of the Acts of Morality as Men, and the Duties of Religion, as Christians, and Men renewed by the Spirit of the Lord; nor can it possibly do otherwise, since it self is infinitely holy, inflexibly just, inviolably faithful, inconceivably

^a Rom. viii. 29, 30. 1 John i. 9. Chap. ii. 1.

^f Tit. ii.

11, 12.

and unalterably good and gracious, like its great Author.

2. The Practice here spoken of is offensive, and affronting to the Christian Religion. It is so in its Nature, as it is an unholy, troublesome, earthy, carnal, dangerous and unprofitable Practice, (all which are most opposite to the Christian Religion) and it is a Practice no better in its usual Consequences and natural Effects; such as what,

1. Reflects on the Honour,
2. Obscures the Beauty,
3. Obstructs the Life and Power,
4. Prejudices the Interest of the Christian Religion.

It is a Practice which reflects on the Honour of the Christian Religion. The common Notion of a Man of Religion is, that he is a conscientious Worshipper of God, as one who has saving Knowledge of, Hope in, and Acquaintance with him. A Christian then is a Man, who, as he has the saving Knowledge of, and Acquaintance with God, through Jesus Christ, as Mediator, worships him faithfully, according to the Rules and Directions, the Commands, and approved Examples, recorded in the New Testament: And as this is his Duty, the more strict his Observance is thereof, the more is his Honour; and the more Honour he does to the Christian Religion. Consequently the more he deviates from; and the less observant he is of this Rule, these Directions,

- tions, Commands and Examples, the more he reflects on the same. But the Practice of Tippling, and frequenting Taverns and Ale-houses, is a wide Deviation herefrom, and so reflects on the Christian Religion in general, as well as on its Instructions in particular.
2. It obscures the Beauty of the Christian Religion. Whatsoever is comely and beautiful in it self, the more nearly its naked Being and Nature is penetrated into; and the more particular Survey is taken thereof, the more of its intrinsick Lustre appears, and the more radiant it is. Whatsoever therefore detracts therefrom, or hinders therein, destroys its Beauty, and tarnishes its Glory. But as the Christian Religion excels in its inward Worth and Beauty, Comeliness and Order; so the Observance of its Instruction makes the Church *Beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an Army with Banners*². And the Practice here spoke of, is every way an Obstruction to the Enquiry into, much more to the discerning this inward Beauty in its Perfection; and, what sullies the Christian Man's Character, it must needs obscure the Beauty of his professed Religion.
3. It obstructs the Life and Power of the Christian Religion. Religion in it self is clothed with such excellent Properties, that it can't be embraced or entertained, but on the

² Song vi. 4.

utmost Deliberation, with Gravity, Sedateness and Composure; and as it can flourish only under such Patronage and Protection, its Health is impaired, and its Power enervated and weakened, when destitute of, and without such a Shelter. And as nothing is more fatal to its Temper than to haunt Taverns and Ale-houses, and nothing does more surely (though unobstantly) As a Worm eats the Gourd, and causes it to wither, the Christian Religion must dwindle in its Beauty, and decay in its Life and Power by this Means. — And as the Christian Religion (even where its Profession is continued) has the tainted Look, and faint Complexion, when this Practice prevails, and Furies of *Bacchus* oft enflame in any Place; so the Influence of the Practice, the Company or the Counsels, which are its most favourite Attendants, have caused some not only to lose the Power, but others even to loose the Appearance, and, at last, to abandon the very Name of Religion; and, what is worse still, some have been persuaded, by reason hereof, to step into the Scorners's Seat, and turn all that is serious into Ridicule and Banter.

4. It prejudices the Interest of the Christian Religion. When our Lord said, *He that is not against us, is for us, or on our Side*ⁿ; he strongly affirmed, he that is not for us, or on our Side, is against us: But to frequent Ta-

ⁿ Mark ix. 40.

averns and Ale-houses, no way appearing to be for the Interest of any Religion, much less of the Christian, (which is the most pure and refined.) It is against, or prejudices it; and when its Professors can allow or indulge themselves in this, they do the utmost Injury to it, and, under Pretence of Friendship, stab it more dangerously; kiss and betray it, which should be every Man's Abhorrence. And further, Who can believe that Man to be in earnest with God or Religion, that continues to act so contrary to the Nature, the known Instructions, and common Dictates of both? This Practice then casts a Stumbling-block in the Way of them that are weak, and discourages them that are asking for the good old Pathsⁱ, and enquiring for the best Way, the Way to Zion, with their Faces thitherward^k. Thus while Men forget or neglect their own Good, and forsake the Place of their Rest, and abide in the Places, if not the Fellowship also of those of whom the Scripture has determined; *They shall not inherit the Kingdom of God^l; They enter not in themselves, and those that are entering in, they hinder^m*; which every one will allow should be no Body's Practice.

ⁱ Jer. vi. 16.
^m Luke xi. 52.

^k Chap. 1. 5.

^l 2 Cor. vi. 10.

CHAP. V.

Of the general Uses.

AS the Practice I have all along been speaking of is common, and seemingly growing in many Places, the Advocates for it may be supposed many, and their Arguments to shelter themselves under, in the Practice, not few: Though I can never be persuaded into an Opinion either of its Beauty, Service, or Lawfulness, and how it can recommend any Person, or, in a peaceable way, serve his Interest. My Desire in the whole being not to sower any Person's Temper, but to help and serve the Person; nor to add Fuel to those, who by a Commonness of the Practice, are too oft enflamed.

I shall therefore endeavour, with Candor, to examine, and with Calmness to answer some of the Arguments that are more commonly used by those whose favourite Practice it is to indulge and countenance it, and their own Continuance therein. These are usually urged either on the Account of Example and Fashion, or Company and Business.

1st Argument. Some say it is the Custom of the Place, and what Persons of their Age, Calling, and Circumstances generally use; and should they not comply with it, or refuse

an Evening-Chat with them in the *Tavern* or *Publick-house*, they would be branded for Opinionists, and looked upon, or tantalized, as Persons who affect Singularity.

To this the Reply is easy. Though it be a common and growing Practice, and what no few Persons, in many Places, fall in with, yet it is not universal; and though the Contagion has extended it self, and conveyed its Influence to many, there are some Persons, in most Places, of all Circumstances and Characters, especially of Religion, that conscientiously shun and bear Testimony against the Practice; so many as are sufficient to preserve you from the dreaded Imputation of Singularity: And if it was not so, the Commonness of any Practice does not prove its Lawfulness; and the Multitude of those who walk in it, does no way justify it, or excuse it to be a Sin: But, on the other hand, more enrages Authority, and weightens and hastens the Blow of Justice; as is usual in the Case of an open Rebellion, and a Confederacy in it. Thus more Fewel makes the Flame hotter; and so says the most undoubted Authority; *If whole Nations forget God, they shall be turned into Hellⁿ.* The Word of God is to be our Rule, and not the Examples of Men; how great, wise, learned, or good soever they are: And this Word expressly says, *Thou shalt not fol-*

ⁿ Psal. ix. 17.

low a Multitude to do evil. It is too great a Compliment to any Fashion, to give in to it, at the Expence of a good Conscience, and Credit of a good Profession; nor will it alleviate or lessen any Person's Misery, that many are in the evil Condition: Nay, it will add to their Calamity, that Darkness overspreads their Horizon, and there is only Distress and Desolation round about; Neighbours Fare will be ill Fare in Hell: We had better be singular than sin, and come off from the customary Evils of the Place, than be involved at last under the common, though unavoidable Ruins.

2d Argument. Some say in favour of this Practice, it is Company that does engage or entice them to it; and they should either wholly abstain from, or seldom use or carry less in such Places, was it not for the sake of the Company; and that such of their good Friends, or Acquaintance, or Benefactors, whom they ought to honour and esteem, or on whom they have much of their Dependance, invite them there, and constrain their Stay.

In answer to this, and to shew how weak and unwarrantable this Argument is, shall refer to what is said already, by many judicious, learned, and grave Divines, in their joint Advice about this Affair.

" This will never justify you. Are you
 " not solemnly cautioned, and charged in the
 " Word of God; *Make no Friends with a vi-*
 " *tious Man, lest thou learn his Ways, and get*
 " *a Snare to thy Soul*. My Son, if Sinners
 " entice thee, consent thou not. Forsake the
 " foolish and live. Withdraw your selves from
 " every Brother that walketh disorderly. Note
 " that Man, and have no Company with him,
 " that he may be ashamed. These are the
 " Warnings of God, and if thou obeyest them,
 " thou shalt be wise for thy self; but if thou
 " scornest, thou alone must bear it. The
 " Sins you are drawn into by others, are your
 " own: Though Sinners entice, they can't
 " compel you; but if overcome when tempt-
 " ed, you are drawn aside of your own Lusts;
 " and every Man shall bear his own Burden.
 " 'Tis a vain Plea then, and carries not the
 " least Colour of an Excuse, to say that you
 " are drawn in by Company. What though
 " they may be your kind Benefactors, their
 " Gifts should not blind your Eyes, and allure
 " you to have Fellowship with them in any
 " unfruitful Works of Darkness. What tho'
 " they are your generous Employers, and your
 " Dependance may be very much upon them
 " for Business and Livelihood, and they'll be
 " displeased if you do not humour them in
 " such Matters; yet be not Partakers with

P Seasonable Advice, p. 21, 22. 9 Prov. xxii. 24, 25. 1 Chap.
 i. 10. 1 Chap. ix. 6. 2 2 Thess. iii. 6. 3 Jam. i. 14.

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"them". For the Eyes of the Lord are over
 "the Righteous. And who is he that will harm
 "you, if ye be Followers of that which is good?
 "But, and if ye suffer for Righteousness sake,
 "happy are ye; and be not afraid of their Ter-
 "ror, neither be troubled". What though
 "they think it strange that you run not with
 "them, speaking evil of you, and frowning
 "upon you, and perhaps doing you some
 "Diskindness, yet if any Man suffer as a
 "Christian, let him not be ashamed nor a-
 "fraid. The Fear of Man is too oft in this
 "Case, undoubtedly, as well as in others, a
 "Snare; especially to young Beginners in
 "the World. But, my Son, fear thou God,
 "for he that feareth God shall come forth of
 "them all.

I need add no more in answer to this Ar-
 gument. All this is sufficiently conclusive
 with me. Would it may satisfy all those to
 whom it shall come, that no Friends, Ac-
 quaintance, Benefactors, Dependances, or Re-
 lations, should be hearkened to, or complied
 with, where the Word of God, the Honour
 of Religion, our own Soul's Interest and Com-
 fort, as well as the known Laws of Reason,
 forbid the Compliment.

- 3d Argument. Some are apt to alledge in
 favour of this Practice, the Conveniency and
 Necessity of it, with respect to their Business.

^x Eph. v. 7.

^y 1 Pet. iii. 12, 13, 14.

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And that they can't so well transact the Affairs of their particular Callings, in any other Place, as in the Tavern or Alehouse; and without being oft, and sometimes staying long or late there.

In answer to this, as I am fully persuaded in my own Breast, that those Persons in general, who frequent this Practice, are conscious to themselves they oft do it needlessly, and spend much Time there, without the Dispatch of any Business at all, that is either honourable, comfortable, or serviceable to themselves, or their Families, or even their Associates: So there are some Persons (it may be in the Compass of their Knowledge) perhaps as considerable Dealers in every Branch of Trade and Business, who manage it all with as much Ease, Honour, and Success; and very seldom, if ever transact any there, as the zealous Observers of, and strenuous Advocates for this Practice: And if all who do so are not allowed to be Persons of a more masterly Genius, they are at least of a more prudent and happy Conduct, and pursue a better concerted Scheme; and are both so many Witnesses against such a Course, and serve to silence all Arguments for either Necessity or Conveniency in the Case. And further, how far soever this Plea may extend in favour of some, when abroad, upon the Business of their several Callings, the Case differs much with those who are at home, and Inhabiters in the Place; especially who have
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Houses of their own. And whatever Allowances either have been or may be warrantably and justly granted for occasional and transient Interviews there, on some particular and extraordinary Emergencies, it may become criminal and scandalous, when it is customary and unnecessary. And so how great or good soever the Designs of erecting or licensing *Taverns* and *Publick-houses* in any City, Town, or Country, were at first, whether the suitable and necessary Accommodation and Refreshment of Travellers and Persons abroad, or Conveniency of them on some publick and extraordinary Business, &c. needlessly to frequent them, sinfully perverts those Ends, and oft turns them into Nurseries of Vice, and to serve divers Lusts and Pleasures, which are dangerous to the Souls, as well as the Health and the outward Estates of Men.

These common Arguments for the Practice being thus stated and answered, the general Uses and Lessons from the whole, are such as

I. Needlessly to frequent *Taverns* and *Publick-houses*, and to spend much Time there, especially the Evenings, has the most presumptuous Evidences of a sinfully evil and unwarrantable Practice. The most plain and conclusive Reasons for the evil Nature and Tendency of any thing, are evidently found in this Practice: It's ugly, threatening, and dishonourable in all its Appearances, powerful and

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contagious in its Influence, and every way dangerous and pernicious in its Effects. It is what many of its Favourites have suffered, and daily suffer much by; nor can any who use it thus expect to escape either Harm or Blame. Few Cities or Towns but have some sad Instances of this, in Persons who (now stripp'd of all their former Credit, Character, and Estate) stand as Land-marks or Beacons, to warn others from what has proved so fatal to them. Thus the Beau is oft reduced to Beggary, and the Idle and Lascivious, by his Prodigality, does not only entrench on his Estate, but embezzle it, and is necessarily clothed with Rags, and brought to a Piece of Bread.

Mankind in general have conceived such a Notion hereof, that they are timorous to be concerned in more weighty Affairs; or in the nearest Relation with those whose immediate Ancestors in particular have been the Subjects, or rather Slaves of *Bacchus*, and oft overtaken with the Excesses which this Practice exposes to; as if it had an hereditary Influence, and necessarily conveyed its Poison unto, and infected Posterity: And it is so remarkably thus, in many Instances and Respects, in most Places and Days, that few choose to come into the Family of a customary Drunkard or Tippler, in *Taverns* or *Alehouses*; and he is reckoned to be a more bold than wise Man, and to run a dangerous Risk who does so.

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2. There are many Persons guilty of a very great Weakness, and under a dangerous Mistake; particularly,

1. Who treat the Practice with Favour and Respect, and either countenance others, or allow themselves in it, with flattering Persuasions or Hopes that they shall never find any of the Inconveniencies in it that are mentioned, but on the contrary. The clearer Sight any pretend to have of the Nature, Power, and necessary Consequences of this Practice, and the stronger Arguments they seem to advance for its Indulgence, all the while, are only a more plain Evidence of the Deception they are under, or of the disguised Sophistry of all their Pleas: For as the Practice is always the same in its Nature, (though its Energy appears not always so soon, or in the same way) it must necessarily produce the same Effects, and expose to the same Excess and Danger both of Body, Mind, and Estate. And it is not only a Practice that wise and good Men, in all Ages, have decry'd and us'd their Endeavours to suppress, but what God himself disapproves of and censures, and we know that his Judgment is true.

2. They are under equal Deception and Danger, who dare speak for, or plead in Vindication of this Practice; as those who can allow themselves in it. No doubt but Sins are more or less heinous in the Eyes of God, according to the Circumstances that attend them, and under

which the Sinners are: And as more Knowledge or better Opportunities and Means of Instruction, Advice, Caution, &c. should restrain those, who enjoy them, from an Indulgence of any evil Principles or Practices, and excite in them a contrary pious Care and Application: When their blessed Enjoyments miss of these good Ends, they become more heavy Aggregations of their Sins. Hence are more Woes denounced on *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, than on *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and against *Capernaum*, than *Sodom*^a; and so though he seems further from the Character of a *blessed Man*, *that sits in the Seat of the Scórner*, than he who only *standeth in the Way of Sinners*, or *walketh in the Counsel of the Ungodly*^b; yet this Man is not faultless in the Eyes of the Lord, who is of purer Eyes than to look on any Sin: Thus they are under a Mistake, and in Danger, who (though themselves don't use it) yet are Advocates for the Practice.

3. Those are not free from a dangerous Mistake, who have an Opinion of this Practice, and hug or favour it in their Minds on any particular and private Views, though they are not accustomed to it, nor plead for it. He who searches the Hearts, and takes more strict Notice, makes more Account thereof, (as they are the Source of Words, and the Springs of Action) than Men usually conceive. It was

^a Matt. xi. 21, 23.

^b Psal. i. 1.

upon these, in a great Measure, that he grounded, or, at least, expressed his Threat to destroy the old World with the Flood; *God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only Evil continually.* The Thoughts or Desires of the Mind, however they may be smothered and concealed from the Eyes of others, can't be hid from the Lord, to whom the Light and the Darkness are all one; and when these are evil, and opinioned of what is so, the Persons who entertain them cannot be holden guiltless: And as these Motions of their Hearts let them on a constant Precipice, 'tis very much if all their Power, Wisdom, or Caution, always prove a sufficient Restraint to them, and they are not at some Turn driven or dragged into the Excesses to which their Minds lean, and their private Inclinations are attached. You have something like this expressed in the divine Oracles, where on a like dangerous Practice, and what this excites to, are these Words: *Can a Man take Fire in his Bosom, and his Cloaths not be burnt? Can one go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt?*

In short, the Miseries of this Practice upon Persons who use it, seldom come alone. There is scarce any one Sin that necessarily draws upon People, or exposes them to a longer

* c Gen. vi. 5—7.

d Prov. vi. 27, 28.

Train, or a greater Variety of Evils; whether of Sin or Misery, than this. The Persons themselves who use it; others in general, and the Ministers of Christ and godly Men in particular, are both affected and afflicted with it; nor can God, or the Christian Religion, think or speak well of it; but contrarywise, in the most severe manner, reprove and censure it: And how should it be otherwise; for the Man is so far lost herein, that calm Reason, which has a wonderful Power to regulate and govern the Affections, is oft dethroned, and thrust down hereby, and Pride, Passion, Discord and Confusion, set up in its room, and all Lust kindled and enflamed to the last Degree: *Whence come Wars and Fightings, Woe, Sorrows, Contentions, Babbings, Wounds without Cause, Redness of Eyes, &c.* * O dangerous Practice!

3. As their Folly is more encreased, their Censure is more heavy, and their Offence more capital, who profess to have the Grace in, as well as the Name of Christ upon them, and can either publicly indulge and plead for, or privately countenance and follow the Practice, or support others in it; they act a Scene that is most satyrical on themselves; for both God and the Christian Religion, as coming from him, as you have heard, are infinitely wise, unspottedly pure, inflexibly just, and inviola-

* James iv. 1. Prov. xxiii. 29.

bly faithful, as well as inconceivably good, &c. And as this Practice has all along appeared the reverse of these, none can follow, or any way favour it, and be blameless: But as it is an higher Step in Wickedness to stand in the way of Sinners, to contend, plead for, and endeavour to vindicate them, or their evil Ways, than to walk in the Counsel of the Ungodly; and every Person's Sins are aggravated proportionably to the better Means or Measures of Knowledge they are favoured with, it is justly expected they, who are supplied with a more liberal Hand, and share more of Heaven's Bounty, either in what is needful for Life or Godliness, should, in a suitable manner, bring more thankful Acknowledgments to their Benefactor, (especially when their Name and Profession implies their affecting Sense of their distinguished Blessings) for *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required*^f.

How black is their just Character then, and how deep are those involved in the Evil of this Practice, who, in a Gospel Land and Day, and under the purest Profession, conceal their Scorn and Contempt of the most wholesome Advice, or kind and gentle Reproofs, by still favouring of it, though in the most private and clandestine Way? They are not less faulty either, who pervert their own Houses or Cham-

^f Luke xii. 48.

bers into the worst Abuse of Taverns and Publick Houses, (that is, Excess) or those who use their Perswasions, or other Endeavours, and take Pleasure to make others drunk, and then make their own and others Sins the Matter of their profane Sport and Merriment. These are the worst Fools in Scripture Account, and have the most hellish Resemblance on them, who thus do Mischief, use Industry to ensnare others, and, when they have accomplished this wicked End, reckon it their own Diversion. These most plainly fight both against Reason and Conscience.

What shall be said of them then that dare to profane the Lord's Days, the Times of more solemn Worship, and spend them, or any part of them, in needless Interviews, in Taverns, or other Publick Houses. These proclaim their own Folly, carry the black Mark in their Foreheads of Persons abandon'd to all Seriousness and Religion; and not only *without Christ, without Hope, and without God in the World*^s, but Enemies to all that is truly good, and resolvedly not subject to the Law of God; however, these seem to carry it now with an Air of Pleasantry, and as if their State was good. No doubt but they have some secret Twinges and cruel Remorses at present; however, their Burden is heavy, their Sin is grievous, most insulting and audacious, and their End, with-

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out Repentance and Reformation, will be dreadful; their witty Tales and pleasant Songs be turned into bitter Howlings and Lamentation, and all their present Comedy into an endless Tragedy. They rob God and his holy Altar now, and strive with the Lord of Hosts. The Heinousness, as well as Folly of their Sin, is not easy to express.

This Practice has been the acknowledged Inlet and first Step to these Courses, that have brought many to the most unnatural and inglorious Ends in this Life. And as it is in the Nature of that Excess and Heat, which a frequenting of Taverns and Publick Houses leads to, (much more where it is attended with the aggravating, and rending Consideration of a Profanation of the Lord's Day thereby) it tends to excite that Violence and Cruelty in Persons; which Jacob so reproved in his Sons, Simeon and Levi: *Instruments of Cruelty are in their Habitations. O, my Soul, come not thou into their Secret; unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united.*

4. All Persons, of what Rank or Character soever, are hence exhorted, as they love themselves, their Reputation and Credit, their true Profit, their real Safety and Bliss; as they would be preserved from the stern Reproofs of a wounded Conscience, and Guilt of a most threatening Sin, and in Peace possess their own

Souls. In a Word, as they love their own Good in Soul, Body, or Estate, the Good of others, in general, or of their faithful Ministers, and godly Men in particular; or, as they tender the Glory of God, and the Christian Religion, they are exhorted here carefully to shun this Practice, and diligently to watch against all Temptations to, and the best coloured Pleas that are used for it, as they would escape the most deadly Poison, or the most pestilential Disease.

“ Carefully guard against every Thing that
 “ would tend to ensnare you; and, in parti-
 “ cular, take Heed of a false Modesty, an easy
 “ Humour, and a Complaisance to Company,
 “ do not betray you. Fortify your selves a-
 “ gainst all Enticements, by carrying proper
 “ serious Thoughts with you continually: By
 “ renewing your (sometime made) solemn
 “ Vows, and daily committing your selves to
 “ the keeping of divine Grace.

The Words of our Lord Jesus are applica-
 ble here, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not
 into Temptation*. And let us not forget what
 is said by St. Paul; *And that knowing the Time,
 that now it is high Time for us to awake out of
 Sleep; for now is our Salvation nearer than
 when we (first) believed. The Night is far spent,
 the Day is at Hand; let us therefore cast off the
 Works of Darkness, and let us put on the Ar-*

ⁱ Mark xiv. 38.

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mour of Light. Let us walk honestly, as in the Day; not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envying: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof^k. And, as Christians in every Deed, let us be sober, putting on the Breast-plate of Faith and Love; and for an Helmet, the Hope of Salvation^l. And let us always remember, that no Virtue commended of God, and in the holy Scripture, ever goes unrewarded: And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and upon the Israel of God^m.

^k Rom. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14.
^{vi.} 16,

^l 1 Thess. v. 8.

^m Gal.

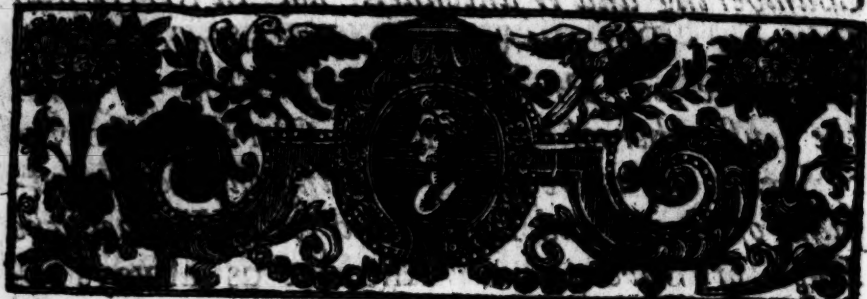


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Taverns and Public-houses.

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Chambering and Bawling; not in Swearing



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THat the foregoing Treatise, and the Ar-
guments collected and contained there-
in, may have their wished for Success, and
produce the good Effects they are intended for,
on all Ranks and Ages of Men, into whose
hands they may come; and particularly may
be of some happy use to the rising Generation,
and leave a visible abiding Influence on young
Persons; it is heartily recommended by its
Penman, from his own Observations when
young, and urged with all the Arguments that
the soft Affections of those tender Years are
capable of; that when Persons are grown up
to

to a greater Maturity, come to weigh Matters more deliberately, sift Arguments more thoroughly; and from a stronger way of Reasoning, and better Power to exercise their Senses, to discern when they are more fixed in their Judgments, firm in their Purposes, and unalterable in their Resolves; as they would not give in to evil Counsels then, or join evil Company, and follow their Examples in any unscriptural, dangerous, and destructive Course, and spend their after Time and Powers, and the Evenings especially, in Vanity and Folly, (that Time which is most suitable, and every way best adapted for their doing good to their Families when they have them of their own,) they would, when they are yet young, carefully avoid all needless spending of the Evenings abroad, and never be out of their own Houses or Lodgings, unless sometime on a religious or other laudable Account, as said before, to improve the Man or the Christian; and in such a way as tends to make them more capable of after Usefulness in the World, or in the Church. For a Custom (whatever it is) and in particular of going abroad in the Evenings, though to spend in the most innocent and harmless Diversions, has an insensible and bewitching Power to blind the Understanding, mislead the Judgment, enslave and captivate the Affections; and not only to leave the Person naked, and without Guard, where

be got, and with whom, and so easily to be drawn into what is most dangerous and pernicious, but to use his best Arguments, and his last Efforts to vindicate his Practice, or at least excuse himself in his wonted and beloved Habit, to spend the Evenings abroad, which has been the Prelude and Fore-runner, if not also the sad Occasion of the other, to many who now arrived at the last Pitch of Profaneness and Impiety, have this only to offer as the first Inducement or Inlet to these vile Excesses. They were suffered and accustomed from their Childhood, and in their Youth to spend the Evenings abroad, in such Places, Company, and Exercise, as their own Tempers and Inclinations prompted them to, and were not wont to be controuled.

Some Persons, perhaps, when they read this, will vouch for the Truth of it, and be ready with their own Experience or Observation, to join mine; that if when they were Children or School-Boys, they were accustomed, for some time, to spend their Evenings commonly abroad, (though in the most harmless Chat or Entertainments of their Years) to break off the Custom as they grew up, has been found such a stubborn Task, and Piece of Self-denial, as they have hardly come up to, and, perhaps, had never learnt all their Days, had they not been taught it by the After-Restraint and Authority

choultry of their Masters, Parents, or Governors.

For the Honour and Ease of their Superiors then, whether Parents, Masters, or other Governors, and for their own after Peace and Comfort, let me prevail on young Persons not to gad abroad in the Evenings, but spend them at home; and those who have Youth committed to their Care, to look strictly to this part of their Charge and prudent Management; as they would do a good Service to their Children and Servants, free themselves from the Censure of others, and their own bitter Reflexions in time to come; and more especially as they love and honour God, value Religion, and would have their Character established by Scripture-Authority, and their future Hopes raised on the best and most lasting Grounds. *That training up Children in the Way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it*^a. And that the Minds of young Persons may not be wearied, or they look upon their being kept at home in the Evenings, as a Confinement, may Parents and Masters, and all who are Heads of Families, employ or entertain their Youth with such Conversation, or reading such Books as may be of equal Pleasure and Advantage to them,

^a Prov. xxii, 6.

to furnish their Minds with Most useful Knowledge, and instruct their Morals; and prepare them better when they are grown up, to conduct themselves with Honour, and be Blessings in the World, And in the Church of Christ; so shall they also be both the Crown and the Comfort of their old Age.

Comfort, let me prevail upon you, to spend them at home; and those who have Youth committed to their Care, to look strictly to this part of their Charge, and prudent Management; as they would do a good Service to their Children and Nephews, and themselves from the Censure of others, and their own bitter Reflections in time to come; and more especially as they love and honour God, value Religion, and would have their Character established by scriptural Authority, and their future Hopes raised on the best and most lasting Grounds. That training up Children in the Way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from. And that the Minds of young Persons, when they are young, are not wearied, or they look upon it as a burden, in the Evenings, when the Parents and Masters, who have the Charge of them, employ or amuse them with such Conversation, or such Books as may be of equal Profit and Advantage to them.